THE LABOUR MONTHLY

A MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR

Editor: R. PALME DUTT

Volume 17 May, 1935 Number 5

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May Day—Be Prepared!
NOTES OF THE MONTH

British Imperialism's War Policy
OBSERVER

Mosley and Lancashire
WILLIAM RUST

India's Fight against the India Bill
M. MUZAFFAR

The Obituary of the *'Times'*
R. P. D.

Book Reviews
BY TOM MANN AND OTHERS

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MAY 11

THE SECOND LABOUR MONTHLY DELEGATE CONFERENCE

FOR THE

UNITED FRONT AGAINST WAR AND FASCISM

will be held on Saturday, May 11th, in the Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1, at 2.45 p.m. (lasting with interval for tea till 10 p.m.).

Chair: MRS. LEAH MANNING (Labour Candidate for Sunderland).

Opener: D. N. Pritt, K.C.

The urgency of the present international situation, and the shortness of time for developing the widest united front against war and fascism, gives exceptional importance to this Conference.

The advance of the united front since the Delegate Conference in January and the new problems arising make it essential to review the position and the next steps to be taken.

Following the January Conference, a further meeting of delegates representative of the organisations participating was held on March 15th to prepare the agenda of the Second Conference.

Two draft resolutions (1) political and (2) organising, have been prepared and are being circulated to all delegates.

A report will be given on what has been achieved on the lines of the suggestions put forward at the First Conference and on the further steps to be taken.

The fullest opportunity will be given for discussion by delegates of the problems of the united front in order to reach common decision as to the next steps to be taken for its further development.

All working-class organisations, political parties, co-operative organisations, and trade union bodies, are invited to send delegates to this Conference (fee, 1s. per delegate). Visitors will also be welcome.

Address all inquiries to the Manager, The LABOUR MONTHLY, 7 John Street, W.C.1.

Any readers who can volunteer their services to assist in the work of preparation of the Conference are asked to communicate with the LABOUR MONTHLY.

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Published at

7 JOHN STREET, Theobald's Road, LONDON, W.C.1.

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The Labour Monthly

Editorial and Publishing Offices :
7 JOHN STREET, LONDON, W.C.1.
Telephone : HOLBORN 6656

¶ The Editor of *The Labour Monthly* invites contributions. He cannot, however, be held responsible for MSS. sent to him or undertake to enter into correspondence regarding rejected contributions, although every endeavour will be made to return the same when a stamped and addressed envelope for that purpose is enclosed.

1934 : *Subscription Rates*
[PAID IN ADVANCE]

British Isles :

One year - 7/- Six months - 3/6

Abroad :

One year 8/- or $2.00 Six months 4/- or $1.00

American Subscription Representative :—Philip Novick, 270 Broadway, Suite 1401, New York City, U.S.A.

The Labour Monthly is also obtainable wholesale from The Workers' Bookshop, 38 Clerkenwell Green, E.C.1.

Advertisement Rates : £8 8s. od. per cover page and pro rata. £5 5s. od. per text page and pro rata (⅛th page minimum).

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The articles in *The Labour Monthly* are indexed in the International Index to Periodicals, New York City, U.S.A. as well as in the annual index in each December issue.

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HOW TO HELP THE LABOUR MONTHLY

THE total print of the LABOUR MONTHLY has now passed the 6,000 mark, and has this month reached 6,200. This steady advance is a testimony to the growing political response to the issues for which it fights, and a signpost on the way to the point when our Journal will be able to cover all costs from sales and we shall not require to burden our readers further with financial appeals.

In the meantime the present financial need is urgent. The debt still stands at over £400. We have pleasure in acknowledging £20 7s. 1½d. this month to the Debt Fund. The letters accompanying these donations are a very great encouragement to our work. A London Labour Councillor writes:

> I must say that I wish my own Party, the Labour Party, would carry on the fight for Socialism as valiantly and consistently as does the LABOUR MONTHLY.

A President of a branch of the Amalgamated Society of Dyers writes:

> Your magazine meets with my unqualified approval; its realistic approach to the problems confronting the working class in these decisive days of a slowly dying—but virulent—economy, which seeks to maintain itself on the basis of continuous degradation for the working class, is a stimulant to one having to combat the attempts to buttress up this system by attacks on our—the workers'—standards and freedom, material and mental.

A Canadian worker contributes to our Guarantee Fund from Vancouver, British Columbia:

> I like the LABOUR MONTHLY so well that I am sending a contribution of $2 for a start, and will pledge myself to send 50c. per month as long as I'm in a job.

We should like now to make a special appeal to *all* our readers—to all those who have not yet contributed. There must be many who would wish to help, but have so far delayed doing so, or, as some letters indicate, have found difficulty in sending the small sums they could spare. To these we should like to make two suggestions. One is to draw in other readers and sympathisers, organising the collection of what can be spared, so as to send in a sum from a group. The other is to send stamps for whatever amount can be spared. Every contribution helps; and we very much want to widen the range of those helping, so that all readers are taking part.

The LABOUR MONTHLY hopes that every reader in sympathy with its objects will give some help. A form is appended for sending contributions either to the Debt Fund or to the Guarantee Fund (a pledge of a regular amount per month). (*See overleaf.*)

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NOTES OF THE MONTH

May Day, 1935—International Situation—Britain and Germany—Anti-Soviet Alliance?—British Policy—Manœuvres and Main Line—Simon in Berlin—Eden in Moscow—Rôle of Eden Tour—Soviet Diplomacy—British Aims—The "Free Hand" for Germany—Stresa—Geneva and Versailles—Franco-Soviet Mutual Assistance Pact—Plain Issues—The Fight against Imperialist War.

MAY Day, 1935. The storm draws closer. Are we ready? "The world is on the verge of a new imperialist world war." In these words the May Day Manifesto of the Executive Committee of the Communist International characterises the present situation. In the same Manifesto the Communist International calls on the Second International for united front May Day demonstrations of all the workers against fascism and the war offensive. The Second International up to the time of writing has not accepted this call. On the contrary, the Chairman of the Second International has just entered into a Government of National Union with the bourgeoisie under the presidency of a big banker. The French Socialist Party in Parliament has declared that the French Socialists "would come forward like every other Frenchman" in defence of French imperialism in danger. The British Labour Party has entered into the national united front on foreign policy, and has received the direct tribute of the Foreign Secretary of the National Government for the "striking exhibition of unity" revealed in the parliamentary debate. All this is before the outbreak of war. What can we expect once war is let loose? The daily accelerated moves and counter-moves of armament-raising, calling up of new classes and semi-mobilisation, recalls the atmosphere of 1913-14. Hitler's Four Year Plan of war preparation reaches its completion in 1936. German Fascism, backed by British Imperialism,

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may strike its first blow sooner. The long protracted inconclusive diplomatic negotiations show that the imperialist war-makers are manœuvring for position. Under cover of these negotiations the preparations go forward. We must be prepared for sudden and dangerous moves. *May Day*, 1935, *sounds the supreme call to international working-class unity in face of the menacing world situation.*

IT is essential to face plainly the realities of the international diplomatic situation ; for a host of confusions are being thrown out to paralyse and break up the workers' ranks. Questions of " blocs," of " alliances," of " pacts," of " collective security," of the rôle of the League of Nations, of Britain's " mediating " rôle, of British " isolation," of the Soviet Union's " returning to the old diplomacy," " entering into systems of military alliances," etc., are thrown out wholesale in the capitalist and social democratic press in such a way as to endeavour to confuse the workers completely, cover up the war-plans of imperialism, conceal the powerful fight against war conducted by the Soviet Union, and end up on the basis of these arguments (also in the case of their utilisation by the most " left socialist " spokesmen) by aligning the workers with their own imperialism. Against all these sophistries we need to set out the clear line of the fight of the international working class against imperialism and against imperialist war, both for the defence of the Soviet Union, that is, the fortress of socialism, against the war-plans of imperialism, and for the fight of the workers in each country against their own imperialists. These two sectors of the fight are inseparable parts of a single fight against imperialism ; all the sophistries arise from the attempts to separate them. But in order to clear these issues we need to enter into the jungle of current diplomatic manœuvres and jargon, behind which they lie concealed.

THE key question of the present international situation is the rôle of British Imperialism in relation to German Fascism. The aggressive war aims of German Fascism are open and unconcealed. But these war-aims could not hope for realisation against the united opposition of the other states

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threatened by them if it were not for the tacit support of British Imperialism. This continuous half-open, half-concealed support under guise of a "mediating" rôle ("Great Britain, true to her mediatorial rôle, must to some extent plead the German case"—*Times*, April 15, 1935) of British Imperialism for German Fascism and its re-armament and expansion, stage by stage, is the real driving-force which is making possible and actually pressing forward the present critical war-situation in Europe. In certain respects a comparison may be made with the rôle of Grey before 1914, when British diplomacy, under a similar cover of apparent "indecision," "no commitments" and half-promises to both sides (which frequently drove even the French and Russian allies to frenzies of anxiety, successfully deceived the Germans and equally deceived liberal opinion at home), alongside very real secret commitments and war-preparations, actually by this process whipped forward both sides to war, where a definite stand could have prevented it, and only at the last moment laid aside the mask and trained its guns on the real enemy against whom the calculations and strategic preparations had been laid in detail for a decade. This same apparent ambiguity of British policy is noted by the *Observer* to-day (April 14, 1935):

> But what if Hitler in future should commit further and more perilous violations of the Peace Treaties? What then? Well, British policy may be firmly depended upon up to a point. In such a case our Government will be of the opinion, and perhaps of the strong opinion, that somebody else shall tell Germany's mother. But while assuredly the righteousness of our conscience will move like clockwork, our action cannot yet be predicted. We cannot contemplate fresh commitments. Yet let no one suppose that in sufficient emergency we might not undertake them. We say "Yes—No" with determined emphasis, and no clarity could be more pronounced. Not for one moment must Britain be understood to say that her plain blunt affirmatives or negatives exclude their opposites. "Circumstances alter cases."

"*Our action cannot yet be predicted.*" This is the characteristic keynote of British diplomacy in the work of war-preparation.

THAT German Fascism counts on this rôle of Britain to make possible the success of its future war is reported by the Berlin correspondent of the *Observer* (March 31, 1935):

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> Germany does not fear a Franco-Russian military alliance (i.e. the familiar distortion of the proposed mutual guarantee pact to which Germany is invited as an equal participant.—R.P.D.) if she can succeed in keeping England in " splendid isolation." Germany would welcome isolation if she knew it were being shared by the British Empire. She would then go forward with her hands free.

The possibility of German Fascism *going forward with hands free* on its aggressive expansionist aims is thus *explicitly dependent on British tacit support*. It will be noted, incidentally, that the proposed all-in mutual guarantee pact for keeping the peace is described as " a Franco-Russian military alliance " ; on the other hand, the very real secret British-German collaboration for the expansionist aims of German Fascism in Eastern Europe is described as " isolation shared by Germany and the British Empire." A similar analysis from another angle may be observed in the *Economist* (April 6, 1935) in an article on " The Alternatives Before Britain."

> We cannot afford to see Europe fall under the domination of a single aggressive military power. In naked terms this means that if ever there is another European war in which Germany is a belligerent, we shall not be able to afford to see the Third Reich emerge victorious in Europe either in the East or in the West. . . . The natural corollary would appear to be to unite with those Powers who, like ourselves, are eager to keep the peace because they have everything to lose and nothing to gain by any violent change in the status quo. The list of these Powers includes Russia and the Little Entente and the Balkan Group, besides Italy and France. If Great Britain were to throw her weight into this scale, the preponderance of European force that would then be mobilised against possible German aggressive designs would be so overwhelming that Germany would almost certainly be rendered impotent for making mischief—*quod erat procurandum*. Nevertheless, this is not practical politics ; for British participation in such an anti-German European military alliance would not be tolerated by British public opinion.

It will be seen that it is here frankly admitted that " if Great Britain were to throw her weight into the scale " of the Powers which are seeking to establish a collective guarantee basis, the Nazi " aggressive designs " would be rendered " impotent." But " this is not practical politics." Once again the tacit first premiss of British policy is the " free hand " for the Nazi expansionist war plans.

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WHAT then is the British policy? We have traced successively, month by month over the past two years, how British policy has from the moment of the accession of Hitler to power steadily assisted and encouraged German Fascism and its military measures, while at the same time seeking to bar the road to its expansion in the West and force its expansion to the East. Ever since MacDonald immediately after the coming of Hitler to power hastened to Geneva to acclaim the new Germany and demand "justice" for it, and proceeded to Rome to draw up the Four Power Pact of Western Imperialism, this policy has continued as the main line. But this policy has met with heavy contradictions. First, the rapid advance of Germany to military and air predominance has become a potential menace to British Imperialism, arousing the alarm of the old Conservatives. Second, the necessity to maintain contact at the same time with France and Italy and seek to build the Western bloc has compelled a type of double policy, in both camps at once. Third, the original collaboration of Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy has turned into sharp conflict over Austria and South-Eastern Europe. Fourth, the still dominant line of French Imperialism, despite powerful forces working for the German alliance, sees quite clearly that the free hand of Germany in Eastern Europe means the ultimate powerlessness of France before Germany. Fifth, the diplomacy of the Soviet Union, acting on this situation, has been able to put forward peace proposals which have won the strong support of all the States fearing Nazi aggression and thus seriously embarrassed the plans of Britain and Germany. Hence the extreme complications and inner conflicts in British policy at the present time.

BUT does this mean that all these complications have turned the main line into its opposite, and that the intensity of the danger point is passed? On the contrary. What is most noticeable is the way in which the line is ceaselessly pressed forward in the face of every obstacle and setback. One manœuvre after another may be forced by circumstances in apparently opposite direction. In every case

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the manœuvre is rapidly discounted ; the basic line comes forward again and is carried to a further stage. This process has been abundantly illustrated through the series of the Berlin and Moscow conversations, through Stresa and through Geneva.

WHAT did Berlin achieve ? First, the " friendliest " meeting of Simon and Hitler (official communiqué) within ten days of the German conscription announcement, in the face of the strong protest notes of France and Italy and the French appeal to the League, amounted to a declaration of British-German solidarity sanctifying and approving the conscription coup. Second, the platform was proclaimed of the anti-Soviet crusade. Hitler " declared it to be the mission of Nazi Germany to stem the tide of Bolshevism, and urged that Western nations should unite for self-protection." (*Daily Telegraph*, March 16, 1935.) The openness of these proclamations may have been embarrassing to British statesmen, but their content was neither unfamiliar, nor unpleasing. It may be noted that, though the entire press, British, German, and of all countries, declared this to have been the main theme of the conversations, Simon in his subsequent report to the House of Commons completely omitted this aspect of Hitler's declarations and made no repudiation of them from the British standpoint. Third, the full programme of German claims was explored ; the bill was found to be a large one, including colonial claims far from pleasing to Britain, and considerable " divergences " had to be reported. Fourth, the British-German plan was concocted, which was subsequently sprung at Stresa, for destroying the proposed Eastern Guarantee Pact and replacing it by an emasculated non-aggression pact. The only positive result declared to have been reached was agreement on the Western Air Pact. It was not surprising that, despite the heavy shock to British opinion of Hitler's unlimited claims, the governmental *Times* should find " the credit side " of the Berlin conversations considerable. (March 29, 1935.)

BUT did not the Moscow visit of Eden show a different picture ? Was not this a demonstration of Anglo-Soviet friendship disproving all the wicked suspicions

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of British policy? Did not that most true and loyal friend of the Soviet Union, the "innocent" *New Leader* declare (in intervals of throwing all the mud possible at Soviet policy as betrayal of the international working class) in its notorious article, "Soviet Russia's Victory—But the Cost Must Be Considered," (April 5, 1935):

> Shall the National Government of Britain become an ally of the Fascist Government of Germany or of the Socialist Government of Russia? That is the issue which has been behind the talks in Berlin and Moscow. . . . The Government appears to be turning to Moscow rather than to Berlin. . . . Many thousands of British Socialists may be asking whether it was really necessary for Soviet Russia to identify herself so completely with the British National Government.

Such "innocence" in concealing the real British-German co-operation and the anti-Soviet policy of the National Government goes a little too deep to be excusable on grounds of ignorance. So the British bourgeoisie, it would appear from this organ, are all the time the true friends of the Soviet Union and even seeking to become its "ally" (the news of this proposal appears to be exclusive to the *New Leader*). This charming picture of harmony between the two countries is only marred by one discordant note of opposition, not, as might be expected by the unthinking, from the Deterdings, Rothermeres and other open enemies of Anglo-Soviet friendship, but rather—acting no doubt as respectable proxies for these—from "thousands of British Socialists" who, in curious union with the Deterdings and Rothermeres, regret to see "Soviet Russia" "identify herself so completely with the National Government." And this is the picture presented by a professedly socialist and even "left socialist" organ at the moment of the most dangerous imperialist anti-soviet offensive, directly led by British Imperialism.

IF the Eden tour to Moscow has really succeeded in fooling even "left socialist" opinion in Britain, it has achieved a considerable measure of success for the National Government, worthy of comparison to the Haldane Mission of Friendship to Berlin in 1912, which played an essential part in the

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preparation of the Anglo-German war. But the real moves in this case are too open, and the accomplices or dupes are too obviously ready to believe everything that British Imperialism wishes them to believe, and to give currency to everything that their imagination can concoct or the most lying capitalist press reports can supply them with, as ammunition against the Soviet Union. At the very outset the National Government betrayed its real stand by sending Simon to Berlin, and the subordinate Eden to Moscow. That decision of the Cabinet majority was as plain as a signpost, without taking into consideration the subsequent sudden heart attack which prevented his presenting his report on his return or going to Stresa. Eden's job in Moscow was to be charming and to decide nothing.

IT was undoubtedly very brave for a minor British Minister for the first time since 1917 to venture into the lions' den in Moscow and, to the amazement of his colleagues, to come home alive, even though with a weakened heart (which the unkind continental press interpreted as the fear of his superiors that he had become infected in Moscow and that his heart might have indeed "weakened"—towards the Soviet Union). Soviet diplomacy undoubtedly made the most brilliant use of this opportunity, and sought with every means of plain practical proposals, combined with sympathetic imaginative approach (including plenty of bunting, and drinking the King's health—is it necessary to waste time explaining that the responsibility for the King remaining on his throne in England lies with the Morrisons and Lansburies, not with Litvinov, and that the job of ending the rule of the King of England is the job of the British working class, not of the Russian working class ?) to win whatever sections in Britain could be won against the anti-soviet war-plans, to put forward concrete proposals for a policy of peace, and to court sympathy in the widest sections of British public opinion for such a policy. *This was as much a fight for the socialist revolution at that particular critical point as any direct armed struggle when the enemy makes that necessary.* The contrast between this approach and the egomania and megalomania of Berlin (in fact, a typical

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contrast between the methods of Marxist objectivity and Fascist subjectivism and bombast) could not but make a very wide impression in Britain. To this extent a very considerable diplomatic victory was won, strengthening the forces in British Imperialism critical of the pro-fascist anti-soviet line.

BUT apart from this moral victory, there was no final outcome or change in the basic line of forces. The judgment of the dominant forces of British Imperialism on the rôle of the Eden Mission to Moscow was admirably summed up in the sneering reference of the *Times* (April 2, 1935):

> Great Britain had so long been graphically described as the chief enemy of the Soviet Republics, and so many British statesmen had been burnt in effigy, that it must be rather difficult for Russians to realise that this country after all has no aggressive designs. *The visit of Mr. Eden, most disarming of envoys, will assuredly have been useful in allaying unnecessary fears.*

"Disarming"; "allaying unncessary fears"; the phrases are most admirably chosen, recalling the Haldane Mission. But the Soviet Union will not be so easily "disarmed" by British Imperialism, while the armed bands of imperialism and fascism surround it with their open plans of aggression and partition.

IMMEDIATELY following the Eden Mission to Moscow the universally intensified campaign throughout the British press against the Eastern Pact revealed at once the true alignment. "The Eastern Pact is dead" became the universal slogan. Even the *Observer*, which had hitherto been among the active supporters of the Eastern Pact, adapted itself to the new line in an article of retreat entitled, "Think It Out." (April 7, 1935):

> The project of an Eastern Locarno is dead, since Germany will not enter into any thorough system of security for that side of Europe any more than for the centre. The bottom is knocked out of the proposal as hitherto conceived for a Ten Years' Peace or similar contract for a shorter term, based on the territorial *status quo* which cannot be broken in the next few years without war. The Nazi Reich is already further on the way to the restoration of Germany's former armed ascendency than our own Government had

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> supposed. The speedy rise of that process to a decisive predominance over any other single nation in Europe cannot now be prevented by any means.

Thus the abandonment of the Eastern Pact, the inevitability of Nazi predominance, and the inevitability of war in the next few years' are taken as postulates to which British policy must adapt itself. The natural conclusion might appear that those states which are still against war should go forward with the Pact, which should remain equally open to Germany. To such a suggestion British expression at once presented a stern negative, declaring it equivalent to "an anti-German alliance." Thus the *Times* wrote (April 8, 1935):

> There is a movement in France which . . . advocates a triple alliance with Czecho-Slovakia and Soviet Russia. This would be manifestly directed against Germany and would receive no support whatever from this country.

Since Germany would be only outside such a mutual assistance pact by its own will, in order to keep its hands free for the expansionist plans openly advocated in its official expressions, it inevitably follows that this British line can only mean the line of *the "free hand" for Nazi Germany and its Eastern aggression.*

THIS line received further demonstration at Stresa. Britain went to Stresa as Germany's advocate, also in the opinion of the Germans themselves. As the Berlin correspondent of the *Observer* reported (April 7, 1935):

> Since hearing the English intention to go to the Stresa Conference in the rôle of a mediator, determined to draw Germany into the discussions, Berlin awaits the Three Power Conference with more confidence. . . . *Germany hopes that Britain will be able to place her case in a favourable light before the French and Italian statesmen.*

Britain, as the *Times* wrote, "must to some extent plead the German case." Similarly the *Daily Herald* gave the line: "What Britain will say at Stresa: No Encirclement of Germany," and further, "Suggestions that there is an immediate danger of a German aggression against any neighbour state are grossly exaggerated." The last is a most singular example of the *Herald's* regular pro-Nazi special pleading. The "danger" of Nazi "aggression against any neighbour state"

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can hardly be denied, in view of the very open official and semi-official declarations, not to mention the pointed insistence on omitting Lithuania from even any non-aggression proposals. But the danger is not "*immediate*"; it is "*exaggerated.*" The baby is only a small one. Therefore nothing should be done about it; since any measure of common defence, which Germany deliberately refuses to enter in order to keep its hands free, is described at once as "encirclement of Germany," and stoutly opposed by Britain. Once more the line of the "free hand" for Nazi Germany.

THE British statesmen did their work at Stresa, and the results of Stresa were fully negative from the point of view of peace. From the circus stage-setting of Mussolini emerged an empty communiqué of vague reaffirmations with only one new "decision." The French and Italians had pressed for some definite decision on economic and financial measures to be taken against future violations or aggressions. This demand was successfully blocked by the British who succeeded in substituting the proposal that a committee should be appointed to "study" the question. "That is the one new 'decision' which issues from Stresa" (*Daily Telegraph*, April 15, 1935). The question of the Eastern Pact was buried in the vague formulation that "negotiations should be pursued for the development which is desired in security in Eastern Europe." In order more effectively to torpedo the Eastern Pact the British-German coup was brought off at the Conference, in the shape of a dramatic announcement by Simon—"just received from Berlin through the British Ambassador"—that Germany was prepared to enter into an Eastern "non-aggression" pact with no guarantees. This stroke, which was sprung on the Conference as a "surprise," had in reality been prepared long beforehand by Simon and Hitler already at the Berlin conversations, as the subsequent German Government statement gave away. The German Government statement, issued on April 14, declared:

> Herr Hitler informed the British delegation during the Berlin conversations that the German Government to their regret were not

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> in a position to declare their adherence to the Eastern Pact in the form proposed. They were ready, however, to give their assent to a collective security pact built on mutual and general non-aggression obligation and procedures of arbitration, and also, while emphasising the difficulties of an incontestible definition of the aggressor, to join in general measures of non-support of the attacking party. The German Government will stand by this offer.

Thus the Stresa " surprise packet " had already been concerted by Hitler and Simon in Berlin, and was only launched at the critical moment at the Stresa Conference when the situation looked dangerous for Germany. That the supposed " offer " was meaningless, and that the only object was to torpedo the real Eastern Pact, was obvious. As the *Daily Telegraph* commented (April 15, 1935), " There is no collective security whatever in a general pact of non-aggression."

GENEVA carried forward the verbal manœuvres. For the degree of Geneva's serious concern to prevent war, when the interests of a major imperialist Power are involved, it may be noted that Abyssinia's appeal against Fascist Italy's war preparations was once more shelved at this session. A verbose resolution was carried pointing out the incorrectness of Germany's unilateral repudiation of its treaty obligations in the new Military Law, and appointing a committee to study the question of measures to be taken in the case of new violations. This resolution was carried almost unanimously and provoked a suitable display of " anger " in Germany. But words do not kill ; and the real practical question of the Eastern Pact was left untouched. It is amusing to note that the Hitler-*Times* met this condemnatory resolution with a long editorial on —the injustices of Versailles, forced " literally at the point of the bayonet " on Germany (April 18, 1935). True, very true. But the *Times* forgets to add that it was the most active at the time in thrusting this " bayonet-point " at the throat of a disarmed and helpless Germany, thus laying the seeds of Hitler-Fascism. We of the revolutionary working class fought this at the time, when it needed to be fought, and when the *Times* was only engaged in doing the dirty work of smashing and despoiling a beaten enemy. Why this sudden discovery of the

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truth fifteen years late—now in the face of Hitler-Germany, armed to the teeth? When Germany was disarmed, seeking only for peace, moving to social revolution, the *Times* was all for the iron heel on Germany. To-day, when Germany is armed, fascist, aggressive and threatening all its neighbour countries and the workers' revolution, the *Times* grovels before Germany, calls for more arms for Germany, and weeps over the injustices of Versailles. Truly, as Hazlitt said, the *Times* is "ever strong upon the stronger side." ("It takes up no falling cause; fights no uphill battle; advocates no great principle, holds out a helping hand to no obscure or oppressed individual: it is 'ever strong upon the stronger side.'") When the time comes, the workers will wipe out Versailles and all its foul brood. But we shall not wipe it out for the benefit of Hitler-Fascism, for the benefit of the bloody German Imperialism which showed its own will at Brest-Litovsk and has no right to whine over Versailles. The fight against Versailles and the whole imperialist network over Europe is the fight of the workers' revolution. Against the alliance of Hitler and Simon, of Nazism and the *Times*, of Rothermere and his now beloved Junkers, the German and British workers fight in unity.

THE one new positive development of the situation, on the eve of Stresa, and due to be carried forward by Laval's repeatedly delayed visit to Moscow, is the advance of the Eastern Pact project, in consequence of Germany's refusal, to the stage of the Franco-Soviet Mutual Assistance Pact, now reported to be agreed in principle, on the basis of the League Covenant. Its adoption is not yet certain, as French Imperialism is showing extreme vacillation, and the fascist war-forces in France, as well as British influence, press towards the line of the bloc with Germany, that is, the Western imperialist bloc against the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, the proposal has advanced. This proposal has at once aroused a howl from the British press, and of course especially from the social democratic press, as a "military alliance." Such a flagrant and deliberate distortion requires a little recourse to elementary

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definitions. What is an "alliance?" An alliance is a combination of two or more powers, A and B, against a third, C (usually for the achievement of certain offensive objectives; compare the British-Russian alliance before the war, with its arrangements for the partition of Persia, or the British-French alliance with its dividing up of Northern Africa). But what is here proposed? A mutual assistance pact against the danger of war, to which A, B and C are equally invited as equal participants. If C refuses, because of open aggressive aims, it requires a peculiar mentality to find the fault lie with A and B. The Mutual Assistance Pact is a pact against war, to which Germany remains invited as an equal participant.

THE peace policy of the Soviet Union is a vital concern of the entire working class, and we can afford no vagueness on these questions, which are the questions of the defence of the socialist fatherland that the international working class has so far won. Why are such negotiations and pacts with imperialist Powers necessary? Because we, the workers in the other countries, are not yet strong enough to overthrow the imperialist Powers; until we reach this point, the overwhelming balance of forces rests with imperialism as a whole, and it becomes essential to break up these forces, to utilise the contradictions of imperialism, in order to prevent by every possible means a combined attack of imperialism on the Soviet Union. To fail to do this would be in reality to betray Socialism. This is elementary common sense, laid down by Lenin since 1917, and well understood by every militant worker. The poison-arrows of the social democratic critics against this policy have been shot since 1917, and have been invariably shot in the interests of imperialism. For what is the alternative line of the social democratic critics? First, they prevent and paralyse the working class revolution in the imperialist countries. Second, they demand that the Soviet Union shall enter into no arrangements with the imperialist Powers, *i.e.*, shall be isolated before the imperialist attack. Thus the line of the social democratic critics (always in the name of "the interests of the international working class," of "the world revolution"),

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is precisely to smooth the path for the combined imperialist attack on the Soviet Union, that is, for the victory of imperialism over socialism. Such arguments and sophistries are a part of the barrage of imperialism, and must be fought wherever they are met.

DO we then place our faith in "guarantee pacts" and "collective security" and the League of Nations, and all the rest of the formulas, for the defence of the Soviet Union? Have we become converted, as the Labour Party writers now delight to allege, to the "collective security" doctrine beloved of the Labour Party and liberal reformism. Certainly not. Such defences are defences of paper, dependent for their validity on momentary interrelationships between the imperialist Powers. The Liberal-Labour doctrine that war can be prevented by a "collective security" system is a lying doctrine which only throws dust in the eyes of the workers to conceal the true struggle against war. The fight against war depends on the strength of the mass struggle; war can only be finally prevented by the socialist revolution; and the defence of the Soviet Union depends on the strength of the Red Army and of the international working class. But the diplomatic manœuvres, the paper instruments, the fluctuating combinations (only valid so long as it is in the interests of a particular imperialist Power to participate in them, and therefore with no final validity) are only of value to *hinder* the war-plans of imperialism, to *expose* the aggressive war-plans, to demonstrate the Soviet Union's fight for peace and in this way to win the support of the widest strata in all countries, and through all these means to help to alter the balance of forces, while we in the imperialist countries are not yet ready, while the danger is still extreme, and thus above all to *gain time for the internationomal working class to gather its forces for the victorious struggle against imperialism and war.* It is on us that the responsibility lies to use every respite thus gained, to mobilise all support for the Soviet Union's fight for peace, and above all to strengthen and prepare the workers' front so as to hasten the time when we shall be

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able to advance to the open revolutionary struggle for the overthrow of imperialism and of imperialist war. To this fight May Day calls the entire international working class, British and German workers in unity, the workers in the imperialist countries and in the Soviet countries and in the colonial countries, against imperialism and fascism and war, for the defence of the Soviet Union, and for the victory of world socialism.

R. P. D.

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BRITISH IMPERIALISM'S WAR POLICY

By OBSERVER

THE delegates to the Three Power Conference at Stresa had hardly assembled when the Conference was rocked by an " incident " of more than ephemeral significance.

At the very moment when the British delegation was gingerly informing the French of its readiness to agree to undertake certain very vaguely defined obligations in a general scheme of collective security—obligations indicated in outline a few days later in the joint resolution on sanctions presented by Laval at Geneva—an " authoritative quarter " suddenly informed the political correspondents of the London newspapers that Britain would in no case undertake any such obligations or commitments.

It is no longer much of a secret that the " authoritative " quarter was Mr. Neville Chamberlain, Chancellor of the Exchequer.

He was immediately repudiated in the strongest terms by the Stresa delegation which had to take the unusual—not to say grotesque step—of specially informing the world just where the authority of the Government was to be found.

The incident was of more than ephemeral importance, because it happened to express in peculiarly vivid and concrete terms that desperate inner contradiction of British foreign policy which has been and will be the dominant factor in British diplomacy in Europe.

At no point was there absolute unity of immediate aim and tactics by the main imperialist groups in London. The contradictions are not only apparent, but real. The fact that they are capable of being resolved, is sometimes over-simplified into the suggestion that they are not there at all. On the contrary, the contradictions are there, and the policy of British imperial diplomacy throughout the world during the past year has been directed precisely to solving them.

The problem, as an American in London put it the other day, is " the problem of the one way ticket and the one way gun." The British Government, he said, in its dealings with German imperialism, is in the position of the big Chicago gangster who had an accomplished gunman brother living in Cleveland. The problem of the man in Chicago was how to supply his brother with a gun and a ticket to New York where he

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might open out new fields for racketeering, without at the same time running the risk of his using the money to come to Chicago instead and employ his gun there.

The problem, of which the Stresa episode was an expression, is the problem of how to build up a powerful capitalist Germany—source of profit, "bulwark against communism in Europe," and spearhead of attack against the Soviet Union—while at the same time ensuring that this power will not interfere, as in 1914, with British imperialism, will not take from Britain the hegemony of the Western and Central European powers, and will not, by its westward menace, create new support in Western Europe for the policy of the Soviet Union.

The Franco-Soviet "rapprochement" is an expression of the fact that the French Government, in order to secure itself from the immediate menace of German fascist imperialism, has been forced, however unwillingly, to make certain concessions to the views of the Soviet Government on the question of how peace is to be organised. It has been forced, however unwillingly, to assist in some directions the plans of the Soviet Government for the organisation of peace in such a fashion as to hinder the war aims of German Fascist Imperialism.

In British policy two extremes, each powerfully represented in London, were at the outset evident in the face of this. It goes without saying that the old gang of the carpenters of the Anti-Soviet front, with Sir Henri Deterding and the Duchess of Atholl among the old familiar faces, was wholeheartedly in favour of one hundred per cent. support for Hitler Germany, and no questions asked about what might be the effects on Anglo-French relations. At the other extreme—with Sir William Tyrell and Sir Austen Chamberlain in conspicuous agreement—were those who saw the "German menace" as a threat equal in gravity and urgency to the threat offered to British imperialism in the years just before 1914. It is worth recalling the odd apparent paradox that it was Winston Churchill who, in 1934, went out of his way to make friendly gestures to the Soviet Union in the House of Commons, and it was the associates of Mr. Churchill, conservative M.P.'s for instance like Robert Boothby, who were going about town most loudly emphasising the German menace.

The history of British diplomacy in Europe during the past year is the history of the attempt to resolve these contradictions. It is worth while to recall that as recently as the end of 1933, it was the belief of the Foreign Office that it would be possible to achieve the "diplomatic isolation" of Germany. "An iron fence round Germany" was one of the favourite phrases at that time in the corridors of the Foreign Office. The aim of these tactics was to secure the predominant position of Britain in Europe, by actually leading a coalition of States in a policy of isolating Germany: thereupon, it was judged

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by the advocates of this policy, the Nazi Government would be rapidly forced to apply to the leader of said coalition—that is to say the British imperialists—for concessions. The concessions would be given on terms agreeable to British imperialism. In other words, the British would be in the position to dictate to Germany just what part it was to play in Europe, particularly it would be able to dictate Germany's ultimate rôle as the bulwark and perhaps the spearhead of the anti-soviet front.

This simple plan very soon proved itself hopelessly over-optimistic. On the one hand, it was cut across by the United States Government, which flatly refused, through Norman Davis, Ambassador at large, to do its bit in putting up its section of the famous ring fence. On the other hand, the whole plan was doomed from the outset by some of the most powerful interests in the City of London. The City quite simply could not afford to allow this " pressure plan " to work itself out, since it would involve an immediate danger of the actual collapse of German capitalism. The dread of heavy immediate financial loss, and the spectre of Bolshevism on the Rhine, which has haunted London ever since 1919, combined to line up the City against the " isolation " plan. That Montague Norman, Governor of the Bank of England, played a prominent and even spectacular rôle in the policy of support for Germany at all costs against the internal enemies of German capitalism, is now familiar history. (The same influence was immediately apparent in the attitude of the *Times* following the Franco-British Agreement of early February—when the *Times* suggested the elimination from the Agreement of everything except the Air Pact ; in the campaign against the Eastern Pact which developed a few days aften Eden had left Moscow, a campaign directed towards minimising the alarm created in British imperialist circles by Hitler's statements to Simon and Eden in Berlin ; and in the Chamberlain statement to the Press during the Stresa talks.)

It became rapidly evident that the " isolation plan "—which had been the pet of the Foreign Office—was a phantasy. Its collapse was accompanied by the development of the Franco-Soviet rapprochement, necessitated for France precisely by the realisation that the City, and hence ultimately British imperialist policy, would never in fact find itself in a position where it would dare to put into practice the loudly voiced threats its diplomatic representatives sometimes made.

It was in this situation that the Barthou policy of the closest possible co-operation with the Soviet Union, and an uncompromising attitude towards fascist Germany, was conceived and hardened. In this same situation, British policy had before it the following essential tasks. The first was to detach France from the Soviet policy. The second, to achieve by some other means, the security from the German " menace," which it had originally hoped to achieve by the isolation policy. The

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third, to recover in Europe the predominating influence which was passing away ; particularly to prevent even a fragment of that influence from passing to the Soviet Union.

The first of these aims could clearly only be achieved by offering to France some substitute guarantee against the threat of fascist Germany. Since, for the reasons already mentioned, this guarantee could not take the form of a weakening of German power, it could only take the form of an extension of the support to be promised to France by the British. The second was attainable only by a policy which, without reducing the power of German fascist imperialism, would alter its direction, canalising it into one harmless for British imperialism. The third, it was calculated, would follow as the natural and inevitable sequence of the first two.

The determination of Barthou to establish the position of France in relation to Germany by means of co-operation with the Soviet Union, and the strengthening of the French position among the states of the Little Entente ; to establish it, that is to say, independently of England, delayed the perfection of British plans.

From the point of view of London and Berlin, the murder of Barthou was a timely and useful act. The fact that the murder was actually the signal for a weakening of the line of policy which he had uncompromisingly followed, was an excellent advertisement for the important rôle which the terrorist and the gunman can play in carrying out the policy of imperialist-fascist states, in the international as well as the domestic field. Barthou was, to use the gangster phrase, most suitable to the subject matter, on the spot. The Barthou policy was on the spot, so far as Berlin and London were concerned. The particular method selected for interrupting the policy which he represented was not the only method possible : it was simply the method most characteristic of the political gangsters who chose it.

In the period following the assassination of Barthou at Marseilles, the divergence became remarkably apparent between those British groups which favoured the strengthening of Germany even at the expense of allowing France to move further into the orbit of Russia, and those who favoured the support of France, the detachment of France from Russia, even at the expense of a policy definitely unfavourable to Germany.

The famous " arms debate " in the House of Commons was a brilliantly illuminating example of the methods used to solve this particular contradiction. The debate was preceded by a tremendous beating of the newspaper toms-toms, scare stories gallore, hints of amazing revelations regarding the extent of German rearmament. The French public was carefully led to believe that the British, at last having recognised the imminence and extent of the " German menace," had at last " woken up," and were about to follow the French example in taking full account

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of the "secret" dossiers on German arms which have been usefully circulating for so long. The British newspapers did their best to bemuse the public into a condition of absolute confusion and befuddlement regarding the whole issue.

Then in the debate itself, it was emphasised that there was now no longer the slightest use in concealing the fact that Germany had rearmed. And in the same breath it was made clear to Germany and the world at large (the private assurance had already been given to the Hitler Government after a hurried visit to London by the British Ambassador to Berlin), that the British Government did not propose to do anything, as the saying is, about it. In other words, German rearmament had been recognised as legal by the British Government. The response of the Government which less than a year before had been talking firmly about the necessity for "diplomatic isolation" for Germany, was simply to announce that the British would undertake a scheme of rearmament of a character to enable Britain to meet any menace there might be.

In subsequent weeks, British diplomacy moved swiftly in its effort to counter the attempts of the Soviet Union to organise a pact of peace and mutual security in eastern Europe. Its moves were determined by its desire to support an eastward policy by fascist Germany, and thus satisfy at the same time the most violent advocates of an attack on Soviet Russia, and those who still regard German imperialism as the most dangerous immediate menace for British imperialist interests.

Gabriel Peri, the Foreign Editor of the *L'Humanité*, has given publicity to the fact that on February 2, the British Ambassador in Paris actually got to the point of proposing a frankly anti-Soviet alliance to the French Government. The proposal failed. The net outcome, namely, the Anglo-French London agreement, was thus once more a compromise between two divergent views of the tactics immediately desirable for British Imperialism.

Particularly striking in this connection was the semi-official suggestion from Berlin on the eve of the Simon visit that Britain should support Germany in a demand for naval parity with the U.S.S.R. in the Baltic.

The inclusion of the Eastern Pact in the scheme at all, was a vivid demonstration of the fact that British imperialism was not now strong enough to undertake a direct frontal attack on the European influence of the tremendous power which the Soviet Union now is. The power and influence of the Soviet Union in the politics of Europe and the world were such that the British Government could not "order the French Government to drop the Eastern Pact, and they were such that the French Government was not willing in London to bind itself to drop the Eastern pact and abandon its co-operation with the Soviet Union, even in exchange for the Air security pact offered by the British.

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There was an even more striking demonstration of this fact in the offing.

By the time Eden got to Moscow it was clear that the power of the Soviet Union, swung squarely behind the drive to organise collective peace, had reached the point where the British were compelled to make not only secret, but open acknowledgment of the fact. At the same moment the alarm at the German menace in certain British imperialist circles had gone so far that Duff Cooper, Financial Secretary to the War Office, was publicly advocating an Anglo-French-Italian-Soviet Bloc as a sole answer to German Conscription.

The problem of " the one way ticket and the one way gun " had reached a new and acute phase.

It is notable that a diplomatic correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* reported from Berlin the British fear that Hitler's denunciation of the " Bolshevist Menace " was only " a stalking horse " for the seizure of military hegemony in Europe by Germany.

The same contradictions were clearly evident at Stresa, and in the hard bargaining which went on at Geneva before the British could be got to agree to present the resolution on German re-armament jointly with France and Italy.

It is clear that the combined power of the Soviet Union and the fear of German imperialism have driven British imperialists to a series of manœuvres which a few years ago they would never have dreamed they would have to undertake.

At the same time, it would be easy to overestimate the extent of the setback in the plans of the anti-Soviet front.

The essential feature of this situation is that the ultimate aim, the long-term goal, the real *success* of British imperialist diplomacy, is the achievement of a European bloc, directed from London and aimed at the Soviet Union. The inner contradictions of British imperialist interests, and the inner contradictions of the whole group of imperialist powers have compelled and will compel manœuvres which carry British policy on long detours from the main line. But the main line remains. Scarcely a day passes without a speech or action of the Government proving that this is the main line, even while the detour is in progress. (For example, the new naval negotiations looking towards a strengthening of German naval power *exclusively* in the Baltic, in exchange for a reduction of German naval forces elsewhere.)

The success of the peace policy of the Soviet Union has forced and prolonged the detour, has hindered the formation of the imperialist bloc of the Western capitalist powers. The international working-class movement must push this achievement to a further stage.

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MOSLEY AND LANCASHIRE

By WILLIAM RUST

[*As was stated at the end of R. Palme Dutt's article last month* the* LABOUR MONTHLY *is aiming at holding in Lancashire in July a United Front Delegate Conference on the position in Lancashire. Further details will be published in the June issue. The following article is in continuation of R. P. Dutt's article; it is hoped to publish further articles in succeeding issues. Readers are urged meanwhile to send in their suggestions covering the subjects they want to see discussed at the conference, or the names and addresses of organisations or individuals whom they consider should be invited to take part.*]

A NEW Saviour has descended upon derelict Lancashire in the person of Sir Oswald Mosley, Bart., the aristocratic Black Shirt chief, whose family made their pile out of their property in that county. Mosley wants to make Lancashire the Fascist stronghold. Hence the concentration of his forces there and the unrestrained boosting of a programme for "saving" the cotton industry.

Mosley promises to find immediate employment for 65,000 Lancashire textile operatives by the simple process of excluding all foreign textiles from the markets of the British empire, especially India. As was previously stated in R. P. Dutt's article last month, according to the *Blackshirt* (November 30, 1934), this programme of Mosley's consists of the following points:

(1) Fascism will exclude Japanese cotton goods from India.

(2) Fascism will remove Indian tariffs against Lancashire goods.

(3) Fascism will exclude foreign textiles from the Crown Colonies.

(4) Fascism will stop the shameful exploitation of Indian workers by international finance.

These four points were put forward by Mosley in a speech at a Manchester Blackshirt demonstration, during the course of which he declared for the strong hand in India and denounced the new India Constitution as a policy of surrender.

This propaganda of Mosley meets with a ready reception amongst the employers, although the overwhelming majority of them, having no desire to jump out of the frying pan into the fire, continue to support the policy of the National Government. If to-day Mosley is welcomed

**The Cotton Industry and The Fascist Offensive in Lancashire.* Further copies of this issue, (April), can be obtained at 7d. post free from the Manager, the LABOUR MONTHLY, 7 John Street, London, W.C.1.

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to Lancashire by many employers and merchants it is not because they have decided to support his policy, but because they regard his wild promises as a new and useful means of confusing and misleading the cotton operatives, who after years of unemployment, short time and low wages cannot be so easily deceived by the old methods.

Mosley opens his campaign to " save Lancashire " at a time when the proposed destruction of ten million spindles is threatening the jobs of thousands of spinners, and when two hundred thousand weavers are doing their utmost to save their old established uniform price list and to prevent wage-cuts, amounting in certain cases to several shillings in the pound. Seeing that the weavers' price list has been cut by 9/5d. in the pound since 1920, one would have thought that a programme for saving Lancashire would at least have included the maintenance of the already low standards of the cotton operatives. But Mosley maintains a studied silence on this point. He waxes eloquent about the revival of Lancashire's " industrial greatness," and he explains in detail how many square yards of cloth are to be sold in the reconquered foreign markets, but he has entirely overlooked what is the most vital question in thousands of Lancashire homes.

We are of course well aware that Mosley is " in favour " of higher standards, that the whole object of his programme is to reduce unemployment and help the suffering operative and that he is even in favour of compelling Indian millowners " to give their workers wages sufficient to maintain a decent standard of life." But what about wages in Lancashire now, Sir Oswald ? What about the abolition of the uniform price list ? What about those operatives whose wages are less than the current rates of unemployment benefit ? They will not be able to feed their children on your haughty speeches and paper programmes about the reduction of unemployment in the sweet by and by.

There is really nothing strange in this " omission " of Mosley's. He is a Fascist, an employers' man, he is angling for support amongst them and therefore dare not oppose their wage cutting programme. Therefore he tries to cover himself by silence. But silence will not help this self-appointed Saviour. Either he is for wage cuts or against them ; it is not difficult to show that Mosley's line definitely assists the employers' offensive.

The essence of Mosley's propaganda is a call for a workers' and employers' united front against Japan and India and the inducement to the workers is the promise of more employment when the foreign markets are won back again. But this type of propaganda has been worked to death in Lancashire during the years of the post-war slump and has always been closely allied with the advocacy of lower labour costs. All the talk about fighting against foreign competition usually resolved itself into a

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demand that the operatives sacrifice part of their wages so that prices could be reduced. There has been a never ending chain of wage cuts in Lancashire ever since the campaign about foreign competition began. Bitter experience has taught the cotton operatives that the employers' plea for a united front against the foreign millowner is only a pretext for forcing wage-cuts on the operatives and undermining their conditions.

Can Japanese Goods be Excluded from India?

The Mosley programme is centred on India. The consumption of Lancashire cotton goods in that country is to be forced up to 1,080 million square yards ; 580 million square yards by the exclusion of Japanese goods and 520 million square yards by the removal of the Indian tariff against Lancashire goods. To this increased export will be added another 220 million yards by the exclusion of all foreign textiles from the Crown Colonies. The present export of Lancashire textiles to all foreign markets is approximately 2,000 million square yards, as against 7,000 million square yards in 1913. Thus, it may be noted in passing, that the height of Mosley's ambition, the export of an additional 1,300 million square yards will still leave Lancashire exports more than 50 per cent. below the pre-war level.

But even this ideal of decay can be shown to be a phantasy having very little to do with sober economic calculations. Exclude 580 million square yards of Japanese goods from India, airily remarks Mosley like a little shop-keeper announcing that in future he will not buy so and so's soap and candles. Does Mosley imagine that the Lancashire workers are foolish enough to believe that Indo-Japanese trade has no roots and that it can be overturned by a stroke of the pen ?

Let us look at the economic facts. Japan is a capitalist country which has built up a huge textile industry during recent years and by reason of cheaper production costs, more efficient marketing and low wages, has been able to penetrate into the Indian market and successfully to compete with Lancashire all over the world. Last year Japan's cotton exports exceeded those of Lancashire by 500 million square yards, although the value was but half of Lancashire's. In other words, Japan is a powerful trade rival, whose exports cannot be wiped out by fascist eloquence. But we will assume that one fine day the Mosley decree is carried out and the import of Japanese goods into India is stopped. What then ?

We will answer by firstly making a little correction in Mosley's figures. The banning of Japanese imports would mean the exclusion of 400 million square yards and not 580 million as according to the terms of the Indo-Japanese trade agreement, concluded in January, 1934, Japanese imports are fixed at a maximum of 400 million square yards in return for the purchase of 1.5 million bales of Indian cotton. Possibly Mosley has never

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heard of this agreement; in any case it is obvious that he took the abnormally swollen figures of 1932-33 and used them solely for propaganda purposes and not in order to present a true picture. In 1931-32 India imported only 340 million square yards from Japan.

But we make this correction not so much to draw attention to Mosley's well known unreliability in economic matters, as to point out that this reduction on Japanese imports did not, and was not expected to, benefit Lancashire to any appreciable extent. According to the "Report on the British Cotton Industry" issued by the Political and Economic Planning Institute, "it is the India mills, making low grade fabrics, which are primarily and directly affected by Japanese competition . . . . it would be far from correct to assume that Lancashire will get more than a minor share."

It is utterly false to say that the exclusion of Japanese goods from India would provide work for 30,000 Lancashire operatives. Lancashire lost its trade in cheap grey cloth long ago to the Indian mills, chiefly because the down-trodden Indian masses could not afford the high Lancashire prices. The Indian mills in turn suffered from the competition of the cheap Japanese greys, and if these imports were now to be excluded the benefit would chiefly accrue not to Lancashire but to the Indian mills.

In fact, it requires but little common sense to see that the exclusion of Japanese imports from India far from putting 30,000 Lancashire operatives in work would probably put quite a number *out of work*. What would the Japanese textile capitalists do with the 400 million square yards barred from the Indian market? Obviously they would try to dispose of them in other parts of the world, if need be at reduced prices. Lancashire, gaining very little by the Indian ban on Japanese goods, would then be faced with a terrific intensification of competition in the markets outside the Empire.

These non-Empire markets, accounting for 45 per cent. of Lancashire export trade, are not even mentioned by Mosley. Yet it is an obvious calculation that the exclusion of foreign textiles from India and the Crown Colonies is bound to divert a large proportion of them into outside markets to the considerable disadvantage of Lancashire as foreign capitalists would unload their goods at even ridiculously low prices rather than be left with unsaleable stocks. What Lancashire stood to gain in India would be more than outweighed by losses in South America, China, Europe, etc. It may be added that these markets are of such importance to the Lancashire capitalists that they actually broke off the Anglo-Japanese textile trade negotiations because the Japanese capitalists wanted to limit the proposed trade agreement to Empire markets.

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Mosley for the Destruction of Indian Textiles.

Having shown that point one of Mosley's programme is nothing but an impudent fraud, let us now turn to his proposal to abolish the Indian tariffs against Lancashire, and in this way to "provide Lancashire with a market of at least 500 million square yards in India, which would give employment to another 25,000 Lancashire workers." How he arrives at this figure of 500 million Mosley does not deign to tell us.

The present Indian tariff against Lancashire textiles is 25 per cent., and against the textiles of other countries 50 per cent. Britain thus enjoys a considerable preference over Japan. In 1932 Lancashire exports to India totalled 600 million square yards, less than 20 per cent. of the pre-war. This loss is to be attributed chiefly to the growth of the Indian mill industry, which apart from hand-loom output, now produces over 3,000 million square yards. Mills and hand-looms combined supply 80 per cent. of home needs.

This big growth of the Indian textile industry whereas all other industries, including agriculture, are deliberately held in an extremely backward condition by British imperialism, can be traced to a number of historical and economic causes. These we will briefly enumerate, but the main point to be remembered is that any policy which bases Lancashire's return to prosperity on the destruction of industry in India or any other country is hopelessly reactionary and harmful to the interests of the workers of all countries.

Prosperity cannot be secured by international competition and attempts to destroy the industry of rivals, but only through the raising of the consumptive capacity of the workers and peasants by means of the organisation of production for use and not for profit.

This truth applies above all to the question of India and Lancashire. If the Indian masses could buy sufficient textile goods to satisfy their bare needs, then the textile industries of both countries would reap the benefit. To attribute the decline of Lancashire solely to the growth of the Indian textile industry is to close one's eyes to the basic fact of *the decline in the purchasing power of the Indian masses.* This fact is recognised by the employers themselves although they are quite unable to propose a solution.

Mr. W. M. Wiggins, chairman of the Silver and Monetary Policy Committee of the Federation of Master Cotton Spinners' Association, states :—

> Though the population of India has increased since 1913-14 by at least 1 per cent. per annum, the total consumption of piece goods has actually declined by 200 million yards per annum. If the average peasant of India were only as prosperous as in the year 1913-14, the yardage consumed in the year 1933-34 would have been 1,250 million more than it was. This is the first significant point in estimating potentialities.

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> On the basis of 1 per cent. increase in the population plus only 1 per cent. increase in productivity per head, the Indian market should now be in a position to absorb 2,800 million yards more than it actually does.
>
> In ten years time there should be effective demand for 4,500 million yards more than the present demand. This is the second significant point.
>
> *Private sources, as well as Government documents, also inform us that large sections of India's population, once dressed in cotton fabrics, are now almost without clothing. The bulk of the population also is comparatively impoverished and compelled to wear much lower qualities than were formerly worn.*—(*Manchester Guardian*, December 1, 1934).

Sir Oswald is not interested in such facts as these. Against the potential increase of 4,500 million yards he puts his " at least 500 million yards " to be transferred to Lancashire by cutting down the production of Indian mills. But even for such a paltry reactionary proposal as this, he is unable to make out a case.

The present 25 per cent. tariff on British textiles imported into India was recently confirmed in the new Trade Agreement between India and Britain which was signed at the beginning of 1935. Despite the desire of the Lancashire employers to have the tariff reduced to 11 per cent. they were apparently satisfied as their spokesman Sir W. Clare Lees declared that " We consider the agreement . . . to be worthy of support." (*Manchester Guardian*, January 11, 1935). And it is obvious that if the Lancashire bosses are more or less satisfied, it is not because of their brotherly honourable feelings towards the Indian bosses, but because they know that they cannot strike a better bargain.

Mosley pretends that taking off and putting on tariffs is as easy as wrapping up fish and chips, but almost everybody outside a blackshirt knows that these tariffs are connected with the methods of British rule in India and that their removal is therefore not a purely economic question.

To the British camp in India belong the landlords and princes who are allowed to pocket part of the taxes and interest. The native capitalists also co-operate with the British imperialists but they do not stand in the same relation as the landlords and princes. At times they have demanded freedom for India, organised struggles against British imperialism and claimed that India be allowed to develop its own industries. One of the few concessions made by British imperialism as a sop to the Indian capitalists and to hold them in alliance against the Indian masses, was to allow a certain scope for the growth of the textile industry.

This is the only industry developed on a large scale in India and even so British interests skin off a good deal of the profits. The 25 per cent. tariff is mainly protective but also partly for revenue purposes imposed

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via Whitehall as one of the ways of compelling India to pay interest on British loans.

It is of course not impossible for the British imperialists to make changes in their methods of ruling India ; it is possible for them to push the native capitalists on one side and to rely more and more on the lathi and the machine gun. This is the kind of policy that Mosley stands for, a policy which would greatly sharpen the situation in India.

We will not dwell on the practical results of such a policy. *It is sufficient to state as an indisputable fact that an attack on the textile industry would meet with a tremendous resistance in India, including the use of the boycott weapon.* To forecast that under these conditions Lancashire's trade will go up by nearly 100 per cent. is ridiculous on the face of it. Mosley with his lying promise of another 25,000 jobs is simply trying to trap Lancashire workers into supporting intensified repression in India.

Who are the Exploiters of India?

India's terrible plight under British rule is so well known that even Mosley dare not deny it. He therefore resorts to a little low cunning. The enslavement of India is not the responsibility of the British ruling class, to which Mosley himself belongs, but is attributed to the machinations of " international Jewish financiers." Point four of Mosley's programme reads :—

> Fascism will stop the shameful exploitation of Indian workers by international finance. The industrial slums of India will be swept away and the millowners in India required to give their workers wages sufficient to maintain a decent standard of life. International finance exploits the workers of India to undercut the workers of Lancashire. It is to the interests of both that the conspiracy should be stopped.—(*Blackshirt*, November 30, 1934).

But it so happens that India is not exploited by an anonymous " international finance," but by British capitalists and financiers, gentlemen whose very real bodies may be seen in the West End or City of London, gentlemen who control His Majesty's Government which sends troops and aeroplanes " to restore order " should any section of the Indian people become too restless. And sharing in this exploitation are those members of the respectable middle class (some of them already enrolled in Mosley's organisation) who draw comfortable dividends from Indian investments or occupy fat jobs in the Indian Civil Service. We should also add that in India itself the feudal maharajahs and native capitalists and landlords under British protection, do not fail to get their share of the pickings.

The plain fact is that India is governed from Whitehall, it is run by British officials headed by the Viceroy and held down by the British Army and Air Force. Even school children know this and for all his

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talk about " international finance " Mosley also knows it as is shown by his recent screeching that the new Indian Constitution, proposed by the National Government, would mean control by the Congress Party, " whose declared policy was to break and to destroy, by any means, the British power." Therefore says Mosley in a big headline " Govern India or Get out." He even goes one better than the Conservative Diehards and charges them with having " merely postponed the day of surrender." (November 30, 1934).

Clearly, all of Mosley's talk about the intention of fascism to " rebuild the Indian economic life . . . restoration of Indian agriculture . . . building up the standard of life of the Indian people," etc., etc., is utterly worthless. British rule has brought India to its present plight and Mosley stands for the continuance of British rule. The economic life of India cannot be rebuilt whilst the Indian workers and peasants pay out their last penny in taxes and interest to the British capitalist class and the landlords supported by them. Mosley supports this blood-sucking. He has never yet been known to propose a reduction of a single penny in India's tribute to Britain.

A new wave of terror in India, a new attack on Indian industry and a sharpening of the tariff war with Japan ; these and increasing employment in Lancashire are the realities of Mosley's Indian policy. The continued enslavement of India for which he stands and which prevents the Indian workers and peasants from consuming the goods they need entirely precludes the possibility of any real recovery in Lancashire.

" Withdraw " into the Empire, but with a Policy Driving to a New World War.

All aspects of Mosley's policy are marked by a wild recklessness and it can have disastrous consequences for the workers if it is ever put into operation, especially as the drive to war can be seen lurking behind his every utterance. Mosley's chief trade weapon is the tariff, a weapon which has not only not helped Lancashire, but which has also considerably reduced world trade and sharpened the conflicts between the big powers.

Mr. H. W. Lee, chairman of the Fine Cotton Spinners' and Doublers' Association Ltd., has commented on the tariff policy of the National Government, as follows :—

> It had encouraged and accentuated the mad rush of so many countries to try to make themselves self contained, and it had been one of the factors that had resulted in the raising of duties and the imposition of quotas against us in so many countries.—(*Manchester Guardian*, May 30).

Lancashire has certainly not gained anything from Britain's tariff policy, but this fact does not prevent the cotton employers from supporting tariffs if they think their particular interests are going to benefit. Only India may not protect itself with tariffs. Thus, they, together with

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Mosley, advocate tariffs in the Crown Colonies against non-British textiles regardless of the fact that the countries whose goods are affected may make reprisals against other branches of British trade. Advantages gained in this way by Lancashire can adversely affect other industries just as other industries have gained at Lancashire's expense.

The main function of tariffs in the present imperialist world is to fight for markets and to force up prices, and in this struggle not only does the working class have to bear the burden but the powers concerned increasingly prepare to follow up the war of tariffs with the armed conflict for which their armies, navies and air fleets have been created.

> At the root of the present threats of war is a struggle for foreign markets going on all over the world. It arises directly and inevitably from the international system of trade. Nations scrambling for trade abroad are drawn into this catastrophic struggle for markets. With every nation taking part in this mad competition there is a gathering momentum driving us to a world war.

These are Mosley's own words ! And they were uttered at the same meeting where he proposed his tariff policy and intensified repression in India. The best answer to Mosley has been given by Mosley himself. The man who advocates mad competition as Lancashire's only salvation himself declares that such recklessness drives directly to world war. All the worse for Mosley then, in his efforts to pose as a friend of the workers, that he should come out with one of those truths (probably learned in the days when he called himself a socialist) which exposes the vital points of his own policy.

Of course, Mosley tries to pretend that his policy does not mean intensified competition. According to him we must " withdraw from that struggle and build up a national and Empire system to provide a market for our goods." But Mosley has by now tied himself up in such knots that he is really making a fool of himself. That's the worst of basing propaganda on deceit and fraud.

All the talk about " withdrawing " into the Empire is bunkum. What Mosley is advocating is a sharpening of the fight for all the markets of the world, a policy which paves the way to war.

The answer of the Lancashire textile workers to Mosley must be very sharp and to the point : *Clear Out.* The blackshirted baronet with his touts and bruisers is no more wanted in Lancashire than he is in London, South Wales or Scotland. His attempt to establish himself in Lancashire and to spread reaction as black as his own shirt must be crushed and crushed heavily The workers of Lancashire who are struggling towards a nobler and better life are not going to be taken in by a fraudulent policy which would set back the wheel of time and mean even more poverty and misery in Lancashire.

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INDIA'S FIGHT AGAINST THE INDIA BILL

By M. MUZAFFAR

[*The following article is a continuation of the series*[1] *which was commenced in January this year on the significance and background of the British Government's new plan to maintain its enslavement of the Indian peoples as embodied in the Government of India Bill now before Parliament.*]

THE Parliamentary Joint Select Committee's Report on Indian constitutional "reforms" has been universally condemned in India. Not since the boycott of the Simon Commission has there been greater unanimity in India among the various political parties. The Indian National Congress, the Muslim League, the Hindu Mahasabha, the Liberal Federation, the Indian Merchants' Chamber, the Servants of India Society, and *all sections of the Labour Movement* have in no unmistakable terms condemned the Report and the India Bill which is based on that Report. *Only* the most reactionary feudal elements in India—the big landlords and the Princes do not look upon the India Bill in the same light. They, too, profess dissatisfaction with it, but that is because they want more safeguards and guarantees for themselves from the British Imperialists as the price of their support to an alien imperialism—at a time when ninety-nine per cent. of the Indian people have expressed their strong disapproval of the new imperialist scheme, and when agrarian discontent in India is directly threatening the very existence of these antiquated parasites.

But while it is true that no single political organisation in India is satisfied with the India Bill, the opposition to the Bill and to Imperialism has not yet reached the stage when it can force Imperialism to take back this measure, or even to revise it. The very fact that the British Government can go on with insolent disregard of Indian public opinion pushing this retrogressive measure through Parliament, proves that they believe and hope that in spite of vocal opposition to the Bill, neither in India nor in England is there any immediate prospect of a powerful pressure

[1]The previous articles in this series were: *The New Deal in India* by Reginald Bridgeman, January, 1935; *The New Imperialist Strategy in India*, by Lester Hutchinson, February, 1935; *The Sixty-Six Per Cent. Background to the India Bill*, by Joan Beauchamp, March, 1935. Copies of each of these issues can be obtained from the Manager, THE LABOUR MONTHLY, 7 John Street, London, W.C.1.

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being brought to bear on them by the largest organised opposition parties which still have a hold over large sections of the masses—the Indian National Congress, and the British Labour Party.

The New Tactics of the Congress

At the last Annual Session of the Congress held at Bombay in November, 1934, the White Paper scheme (which is the basis of the present Bill) was solemnly "rejected" by the Congress. But at the same session the Congress decided to participate in the elections to the Legislative Assembly, and abandon all "direct action" against Imperialist rule. This step was, of course, welcomed by British Imperialism ; because even though they knew that the Congress leaders would not "fight" for India's Independence except by "peaceful and legitimate means" as laid down in the Congress creed, still the experience of the last sixteen years clearly showed that mass movements led even by such people, had invariably developed into something more powerful and dangerous than what the Congress leaders or the Imperialists expected. The capture of Peshawar and Sholapur by the workers, the widespread peasant rebellions in all parts of the country, the mass strikes by the working class and non-payment of taxes by the peasants—all these things Imperialism cannot afford to see repeated again in India. The economic situation is far too critical ; and a revolutionary crisis might develop at any moment which might threaten the very foundations of the present régime in India. Not only the Imperialists, but the Congress leaders are also afraid of such developments. Hence, their complete abandonment of all activity tending towards mass action, and hence the fact that they have embraced constitutionalism with such fervour and enthusiasm. As to Gandhi, he professes to have given up politics altogether ; he is begging the Imperialist Government to help him with his Village "Uplift" work, and indignant Congressmen in the Legislative Assembly have asked the Government what possible "harm" could there be in Government officials helping the Mahatma—now that he has openly declared that he will devote himself uniquely to "social work" !

The recent debate in the Legislative Assembly over the Joint Select Committee's Report very clearly shows the whole attitude of the Congress leaders towards the Indian struggle for independence. The following amendment was moved by Mr. Desai, the leader of the Congress Party in the Assembly :

> This assembly is of opinion that the proposed scheme of Constitution for the Government of India is conceived in a spirit of imperialist domination and economic exploitation and transfers no real power to the people of India, and that the acceptance of such a constitution will retard instead of furthering the political and economic progress of India, and recommends to the Governor-General in Council to advise His

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> Majesty's Government not to proceed with any legislation based on the said scheme. (*Legislative Assembly Debates*, Feb. 1935).

But while our brave Congress leaders, comfortably sitting in the Assembly, talk about "imperialist domination and exploitation"—strong phrases to come out of the mouths of Congress leaders—one looks in vain in the speeches of these gentlemen for even a verbal declaration that they stand for the complete independence of India outside the British Empire, let alone as to how that independence is going to be achieved. They criticise the Report and want to reject it—but beyond that they do not want to go. No one with the slightest amount of common sense can believe that the British imperialists are going to be driven out of India by mere speeches in the Assembly—not even Dominion Status, not even partial demands can be conceded to us without mass struggle—this has been the experience in India as well as the experience in all other countries wherever people have striven against political or social tyranny and exploitation. The astute Congress leaders know this as well as anybody else. So that when the logical question is put to them: what is the next step after the rejection of the India Bill by the Assembly; what is the further stage of the struggle against imperialism—and they in reply can profess only their utter helplessness to do anything—we know that this not only means the bankruptcy of their political leadership, but that it is a deliberate and conscious attempt on their part to retard, check, hinder and mislead the mass-struggle in India. Thus Mr. Desai concluded his speech by saying:

> Even if we have not got power to compel the Government to grant what we desire or deserve we have certainly self-respect to repel what we do not want. (*Legislative Assembly Debates*, Feb. 1935).

The speeches of other leaders also end in the same hopeless strain: we are helpless against imperialism—so the only thing there is left for us to do is to console ourselves with the noble idea that we are preserving our "self-respect." Mr. M. A. Jinnah, the Mohammedan nationalist leader, also ended his speech in the same strain:

> We may be helpless, but our self-respect demands that we tell you that we do not want this scheme. (*Legislative Assembly Debates*, Feb. 1935).

Pandit G. B. Pant, deputy leader of the Congress party, was pathetic in his confession. He appealed to the Government to realise:

> That Congressmen as human beings would like to give up the life of sacrifices involving austerities . . . if they could find in the proposed scheme the hope of advance towards the goal the Congress had been working for. (*Legislative Assembly Debates*, Feb. 1935).

Mr. Shamlal, another Congress veteran from the Punjab, made the abject remark:

> Even if we failed in the method of direct action the Congressmen will not compromise with evil. (*Legislative Assembly Debates*, Feb. 1935).

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There is no wonder therefore that the Government spokesmen in the debate did not take the Congress speeches seriously. Sir Joseph Bhore, a Member of the Viceroy's Council, characterised the Congress attitude towards the Bill as "*an empty meaningless and theatrical gesture.*" This impudent remark of an imperialist lackey was possible only because Congress leaders have abandoned *mass-struggle ;* because they have no faith in the revolutionary actions of the Indian people ; because they do not want to participate in the heroic struggle of the anti-imperialist fighters in India.

The Imperialist Government knows that in spite of their speeches rejecting the proposed scheme, the Congress leaders will work the "Reforms." What is the alternative to the India Bill ? Call a Constituent Assembly, reply some of the Congress leaders. A Constituent Assembly, called by the British imperialists, which is going to frame a Constitution for India, involving the end of British rule ! One has only to put the proposition in this way to realise how stupid and absurd it is. There is not the slightest doubt that Congress leaders know very well that the British Government is not going to hand over the reins of government to them in such a simple and easy manner. If that was possible, if imperialism could be persuaded to destroy itself, India would have been free a long time ago. The only possible motive which the Congress leaders can have in using this slogan is to deceive and delude the masses which still follow them, into believing that they stand for freedom ; that they are fighting for the liberation of our country from its imperialist yoke.

The Congress Socialists

But what of the minority—the Congress Socialist Party ? They have refused to participate in the elections to the Councils ; they declare that they want to establish a Socialist State in India. Their leaders have even spoken about the necessity of a revolution. But what is their *method* ? Do they fundamentally differ from their right-wing colleagues in the Congress ? When the Working Committee of the Congress declared itself to be opposed to the idea of class-war and expressed its dissatisfaction with "loose talk" about it in the ranks of the Socialists, the Congress Socialist leaders issued a statement, wherein they said :

> The symbol of faith of Congress is the achievement of Purna Swaraj, with the aid of legal and peaceful means. There is nothing in our programme which would in the least contradict this. We also want to win independence, and the very fact of our being in the Congress proves *the peaceful and legal means which we apply.* (My italics—M.M.) (*Bombay Chronicle*, Nov. 1934).

More recently when during the celebration of Independence Day on January 26 the Congress Working Committee proceeded to whittle

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down the original Declaration of Independence[2], which was couched in strong words to a mere pious affirmation in the cult of " non-violence in thought, word and deed," the Socialists objected to the change. They said that the Congress should adhere to its creed of striving after Purna Swaraj by every peaceful and legitimate means, and not aspire to reach the higher spiritual level of the pure Gandhian cult.

This incident is characteristic of the whole attitude of the Congress Socialists towards the anti-imperialist question. They criticise the Congress leadership up to a point, but when it is a question of following a real revolutionary line of anti-imperialist struggle we find them, in effect, doing exactly the same as the Right Wing of the Congress. The Congress Socialists want the " establishment of a Socialist Society," but not a Workers' and Peasants' Republic ; they believe in class-war, but it is to be waged by " peaceful and legitimate means " ; they are for " mass action," but not in " mass action culminating in a general strike and non-payment of taxes, rent and debt charges " — all this was made clear at the Second Session of their Party held last November at Bombay when revolutionary amendments were lost and the programme of the Socialist Party was finally passed.

The Class Character of the Congress

It is necessary to analyse the character of the Congress in order to understand its present defeatist vacillating and contradictory attitude. While the majority of the rank and file of Congressmen belong to the lower middle-class, lawyers, doctors, students, journalists, artisans, sections of peasantry and town poor, the leadership of that organisation is in the hands of the upper bourgeoisie who control the whole Congress machinery. The interests of this class are opposed to the British capitalist class and it wants the monopoly of the Indian market for itself to the exclusion of the British competitor. But there are certain difficulties in the way. Firstly, in order to fight with British Imperialism this class, the Indian bourgeoisie, needs the support of the Indian masses : workers, peasants, the petty bourgeoisie ; but they cannot rely on this support because the masses once roused might not remain under their control and thus threaten the existence both of Imperialism and of the Indian bourgeoisie. Secondly, the Indian bourgeoisie is, to a very large extent, dependent on British finance capital,—so that it does not want a complete break from British capitalism. And, thirdly, the Indian bourgeoisie is closely connected with the landed feudal elements in India—so that it hesitates to declare itself in favour of the total abolition of feudalism. The Congress has again and again assured the Princes and the landlords

[2]This declaration was read out after the famous Independence resolution had been passed at the Lahore Congress in December, 1929.

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that it will stand by them in case they are threatened with the expropriation of their lands.

The Indian bourgeoisie has therefore to pursue a most difficult course. Fearing the imperialists above, and trembling at the prospect of a revolution from below, it has to manœuvre always for a position in which it will *appear to be revolutionary*, and so be the leader of the national emancipatory movement ; but as far as real mass actions are concerned it hesitates a thousand times before it takes a single step forward. And very often the step forward is followed by two steps backwards, because situations develop when its position is threatened from below—when the masses begin to show ominous signs of independent action and independent leadership. The whole history of the Indian National Congress, and most recently its attitude towards the India Bill, is a proof of this.

The Anti-Imperialist United Front

The main problem, therefore, of the anti-imperialist struggle in India to-day is the regrouping of all the anti-imperialist elements under a new leadership—the leadership of a class whose interests, unlike those of the bourgeoisie, lie in carrying on a ceaseless struggle against imperialism until it is totally destroyed. This class is the working-class. And the working-class led by its Party, the Communist Party, can achieve this leadership only by correctly following the tactics of the united front. The rank and file Congressmen who are genuinely anti-imperialists ; the Congress Socialists who are dissatisfied with the present leadership of the Congress ; all those honest sections of the people who want to fight imperialism, but who are still in the ranks or under the influence of the Congress, are now standing at cross-roads—one leading towards Constitutionalism, reformism, inaction and defeat, the other towards mass action, revolution and victory—can be won over only if the revolutionaries in India, patiently and intelligently build up a wide-spread anti-imperialist united front, keeping their party and identity intact and adding to its strength by proving to the masses *through action* the correctness of their programme and the sincerity of their purpose.

This is the only way in which the challenge of the India Bill can be met by India. This is the only way in which India can advance towards freedom from British rule. The indications are that such a united front is being built up ; the great united front meeting on February the 7th in Bombay and similar meetings in all other parts of India ; the move towards unity in the Trade Union Movement ; the united front demonstrations against the banning of the Communist Party of India and other working-class organisations in Bombay and Calcutta ; all these events show that the working-class is closing its ranks to meet the imperialist offensive.

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A Discussion on Trade Union Problems and Policy—II.[1]

BELOW is printed a further selection of contributions to the discussion commenced last month on Trade Union Problems and Policy. To guide the discussion the following series of six questions have been drawn up. Readers are invited to send in their contributions for publication in succeeding numbers.

1. At the present time many Trade Unions are presenting demands for increased wages, and at the Trades Union Congress last September the Chairman, Mr. A. Conley, spoke of the need for co-ordination of the Trade Union forces. Do you believe such co-ordination is necessary? If so, what in your opinion are the first steps which should be taken towards that objective?

2. What in your opinion should be the line of trade union policy in the present economic situation? What should be the demands of the active workers in the Trade Unions? Where a demand has been tabled for an advance in wages, what in your opinion are the steps which should be taken within the factories and the Unions in order to achieve that demand?

3. What is your opinion of the circular of the Trades Union Congress General Council (on "disruptive movements"), proposing the revision of trade union constitutions with a view to excluding militant trade unionists from election to delegate or official positions? How will it effect trade union democracy and the building up of the Unions?

4. What in your opinion should be the attitude of the Unions to such schemes of rationalisation as are being suggested for a number of industries, i.e., the Cotton Control Board, compulsory amalgamation in mining, etc.?

5. What concrete steps do you think it is possible for the Trade Unions to take in order to prevent the development of Fascism in this country?

6. What in your opinion should be the attitude of the Unions (a) as economic organs and (b) as affiliated bodies to the Labour Party towards the proposals for the formation of a United Front against Fascism and War which the Communist Party and the I.L.P. have

[1]This discussion first started in the April issue with contributions from R. G. L. Bowyer (*Labour Councillor: President, Chemical Workers' Union*); R. Beamish (*Chairman, Abercrave Lodge, South Wales Miners' Federation: Vice-Chairman Abercrave and Ystradgynlais Trades and Labour Council: E.C. Member, Anthracite Combine Committee*); H. Holt (*Secretary, Ardsley Branch, Locomotive Engineers and Firemen*), and R. Pigford (*Delegate, Ryhope Lodge, Durham Miners' Association*). One or two copies of this issue are still available and can be obtained (7d. post free) from The Manager, THE LABOUR MONTHLY, 7 John Street, London, W.C.1.

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made to the Labour Party, in view of the decision of the Labour and Socialist International to allow its affiliated sections freedom of action in this respect ?

Contributions should, if possible, be not more than 800 words in length ; of course shorter contributions will be welcome. In signing their reply readers are asked to add the name of their Union with official position if any.

Readers are also urged to send in to the LABOUR MONTHLY the names and addresses of any trade unionists in their area to whom an invitation to take part in this discussion might well be sent.

It should be noted that the contributions are from individuals and do not necessarily commit the organisation or part of the organisation of which the contributors are officers or members.

In a later issue it is intended to publish a survey of all the contributions.

From a Patternmakers' Trades Council Delegate

(1) When Mr. Conley declares for the Co-ordination of trade union forces, what exactly does he mean by co-ordinating and for what purpose ? The leadership of the T.U.C. are in favour of co-ordinating trade union forces where this will strengthen their bureaucratic hold over the machinery and membership of the trade unions, for the purpose of controlling the workers in the interests of "Mondism" and to further the illusions of obtaining better conditions and eventually Socialism through the medium of the vote exercised through capitalist institutions. I do believe co-ordination of trade union forces is necessary in order to advance the struggle of the workers for better conditions, but of a different character and purpose than that to which Mr. Conley aspires. Firstly, in the trade union branches the demands for increased wages, less hours, ending of agreements, etc., should be made a burning question and attempts made to get other branches and district committees in the same union taking up the demands, building from the nuclei of determined branches support wherever possible and putting pressure on the higher organs of the Union for action to be taken to enforce the demands. The union members in the factories should draw in the unorganised workers on the basis of the fight for the demands in the particular industry and wherever possible set up a shop committee which enables the feelings and grievances of the workers in the factory to be taken to the Union branch, and also gives the trade union comrades better facilities for leadership with the unorganised factory workers.

(2) The line of trade union policy in the present economic situation should be one of demands for new and better agreements for the workers on the basis of campaigns in the different unions and factories, calling for action to enforce these demands.

(3) I believe that the Circular from the T.U.C. re "disruptive elements" is an attack upon democracy in the trade unions, and if carried into effect will mean that the trade unions will be made safer for Capitalist democracy and its sequel Fascism. The instigators of the Circular are only carrying out what is logical in relation to their theory of working class power by votes through the institutions of capitalism.

Our experience of union recruiting during recent years shows that members have been recruited mainly through correct leadership in struggles led by the so-called disruptors, therefore the T.U.C. circular can only lead to checking the growth of the unions.

(4) In answer to this question let me firstly analyse the attitude of the present T.U.C. leadership. They argue as follows :—Is not the further rationalisation

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of industry under capitalism inevitable and does not this mean Control Boards, amalgamation schemes, etc. This being so, it is up to the trade unions not to oppose something which is an inevitable development of present-day society, but rather to take a hand in assisting the schemes of rationalisation while at the same time try to safeguard the interests of the workers as much as possible during the process. This to many may sound quite plausible, but let us take a closer view. Rationalisation within the system of Capitalism under the guise of Control Boards, amalgamation schemes, etc., are developments moving towards the monopoly of finance capital over the main industries, and the political reflex of monopoly in industry is monopoly in political life, i.e. fascism. So when the T.U.C. leaders say these economic schemes of capitalism are inevitable they also mean that fascism is inevitable and that instead of the workers fighting the advance of fascism they should assist its development and try to get small favours for the workers who suffer under its oppression.

The trade unions should oppose the schemes of capitalist rationalisation because they can only lead to worse conditions for the workers as a whole. The best way to oppose is as generally pointed out in answer to question (1), but of course taking the line of fight right from a particular proposal of rationalisation in a particular industry and exposing the scheme right from its inception, right along to the mass dismissals and other evil effects which will materialise should the workers fail to stop the schemes in their infancy. It is also absolutely necessary while putting forward the policy of fighting against any attacks which capitalism makes against the workers in its further developments, to show to the workers that we have an alternative. This alternative is the development of the workers' organisation and class-consciousness through its experiences in struggle and through the widest possible enlightenment of the workers in the necessity of *Socialism* being attained through *workers' power*.

(5) Unless the revolutionary elements within the working class and especially within the trade unions, are able to develop the mass struggles of the workers, creating the desire for unity in action and bring pressure on to the reformist leadership as in France, the successful fight against fascism cannot be developed.

The answers to (5) and (6) are closely linked together and can be briefly summed up as follows :—(a) C.P. and I.L.P. to continue appealing to the reformist leadership for unity of action on specific issues, using the elections to give an impetus to this unity. (b) Intensive work inside the trade unions and development of action on demands. The wide popularisation of the United Front of action coupled with the explanation of workers power as the only way to Socialism. (c) Big mass campaigns such as Hunger Marches, September 9th, etc., which build the United Front of action from below.

NORMAN WALKINGTON (*President, Leeds No. 1 Branch, United Pattern Makers' Association : delegate to Leeds Trades Council.*)

From a Kent Miners' Branch President

(1) Is the wisest policy under present conditions to press for increased wages? Assuming increased wages were realised, what is to prevent the ruling class, with political and economic power at their disposal, rendering this useless? I think the trade union movement, under present conditions, would be better advised to press for increased leisure without any reduction in wages. They would then have a chance of achieving what is to-day so desirable: Unity of Employed and Unemployed. Whether the trade Union movement decides on the course of higher wages or more leisure, it is patent that to achieve either requires a complete reorganisation. First steps? Continued educational attack on the present conception of the average trade unionist, destroy his "beliefs" in the "always has been and always will be" idea, substitute a revolutionary will to achieve emancipation from wage slavery. By scientific stages build up strong disciplined Industrial Unions in place of the present three main forms,

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i.e., Craft, Federations, Industrial. Needs demand scientifically organised industrial unions led by class-conscious leaders trained deliberately for their job.

(2) Partly covered by question (1) above. If a demand is tabled for an advance in wages, then obviously an active worker concentrates all his energy on that, making himself as fully acquainted as possible with the position of the industry in which he is engaged. He will continually on every occasion which presents itself make his fellow workmates see the position in all its implications, laying stress on the central idea of unity, and insisting that these are only steps on the way to the abolition of all exploitation, minimising nothing of what must be done to achieve the final aim. Above all the active worker will carry out best this policy if he has in the years and months ahead *lived it* in his day to day relations with his mates, has, that is by his example, shown that things can be done given unity and the will.

(3) My views of Circular 16 (Black Circular) are very emphatic. They are that it is the most reactionary step that has ever been taken in the modern trade union movement. It will certainly *not* result in building up the trade union movement, rather will it disrupt it from one end to the other. If political opinions are suppressed in the trade unions, where is this boasted democracy? It must be remembered, however, that this is *not* a circular of the trade union movement, it is a circular of the officials of that movement; again, it is not achieved by and through democratic means, but by dictatorial methods. If political opinions are suppressed, why not religious ones and æsthetic ones also; ban vegetarians and nudists! It must be said also, however, that many so-called Communists have themselves given the excuse for the issue of this circular, their actions have been idiotic in many cases and disruptive. Instead of acting always as good class-conscious trade unionists they have merely acted as agents of a particular political party. I decry any attempt to split the trade unions on a party political issue; it must lead to disaster. Obviously democracy cannot live under conditions of bureaucratic dictatorship, which was implied in the ruling that any body not adhering to the General Council decision *would risk* being expelled.

(4) Opposition. They will result in tying up the trade unions to the state and take away their freedom. Will lead to the Corporate State of Fascism, under a Government such as the present and under a possible Labour Government to bureaucratic domination at the top and inertia and thus disaster at the bottom. This point leads me to the conclusion that the best attack on Capitalism on the part of the trade unions is the fight for increased leisure to unite the employed and the unemployed, consciously realising that Capitalism cannot give it and that the fight must become a political fight for power and economic democracy.

(5) *Unity* on the widest possible basis, both against Fascism and its counterpart, War. Make it clear that Fascism is no new system but merely Capitalism writ large, becoming the unmasked dictatorship it has always been under conditions of "capitalist" democracy. Again, this mainly depends upon leadership and education.

(6) Have already answered this by implication, but must insist it must be a Unity for objects stated and not made the platform for *any* political party seeking political advantage. There must exist *complete party* political neutrality, anything less would be sabotaging the working class fight and would only lead to splits and weakness rather than strength. Surely this is the lesson of Germany? One cannot unite with people who call each other traitors, no matter who they are.

W. H. BENNETT (*President, Tilmanstone Branch, Kent Mineworkers' Association, Secretary, Dover and District Trades Council, Prospective Labour Candidate for Dover*).

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From a Member of the Yorkshire Miners

Co-ordination is necessary and, if co-ordination could find every trade union official permanent jobs it would be realised to-day. Voluntary leaders are by far the best because they are in the movement body and soul, not for what they get out of it financially, but because they glory in doing their little bit towards furthering the emancipation of the workers and their reserves, the unemployed. Nothing short of complete re-organisation will get us anywhere, new leaders, new methods, ruthless undiluted re-organisation. Trade-unionism must have leaders who will lead, in thought, in deed, and principle, the greatest mistakes ever made are relevant to-day ubiquitous, and one of these is the blind faith in leaders, who, paid salaries to the point of independence, on reaching that point forget who put them there, and even betray them. No leader is worth more than the rank-and-file that pays him, for ever keeping him in the workers' domain. For the purpose of re-organisation we must introduce " business ballots " thereby eliminating the possibility of organisation being governed by " clique majorities," that is by the minority. The introduction of " real democracy " into trade unions is long overdue, the conduct of leaders should be subject to " votes of censure." If we cannot get results this way, then we should introduce " workers' councils " and abolish the present-day apologies for trade unions, whose only action is as intermediaries between employers and employees, the enemy within the gates, messengers of the destruction of morale, careless of the interests of the rank and file in the interests of self-enrichment. The final units of trade unionism must take unto themselves the task of government; self-government would banish the " Selfocrat " for ever.

First and foremost working-class policy should demand the natural heritage, the " right to live," the control to the greatest extent of the goods produced, form a society which in action would be national, nay, international.

In a demand for wages, nothing is more effective than a General strike which is only illegal in so far as it is a General lock-out.

The General Council's idea of disruptive movements is colossally different to mine. As to the document itself it is very disruptive, looks like it, smells and is like the work of a disruptive, and what is more the work of a would be " dictator," and I think I could guess who? If the proposals came into action—and somehow I wish they would—from the ashes of the destroyed trade unions perhaps, we should build a movement the greatest the world has ever known which would help to give the working class their place in the sun, and establish for all time " *democracy*," which would be the citadel of solidarity and unity of purpose, invested in numbers the first principle, and the dividends, " Emancipation."

Amalgamations against the working class should be met by amalgamations for the working class.

Destroy, strangle the first seeds of Fascism, glaring at us in the form of " permanent officialdom." The unions as economic organs should give service to the working classes, service value for money, reduced contributions, increased membership, greater security to the rank and file who are the real units of trade-unionism, the paying, the fighting and the suffering units. As affiliated bodies to the Labour Party they should *dis-affiliate* and form a political party of their own which would consist of a little more than the few political directors that is the Labour Party, like other parties a great window display to catch the eye and the vote. Perchance if they ever do get enough votes to give them power by the time they had decided who was to have the different jobs and thought about a little working-class legislation a General election would be looming. In office they have not the majority, in power not the time. Therefore my concluding words. Form a party that does not only include the directors as in the Labour Party, but a party of *all* trade unions and trade unionists, shareholders in principle, action and responsibility. Such a party coupled

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with its natural reserves the "unemployed" is the one that will give to us the first real working-class government.

STANLEY TUTILL (*Yorkshire Miners' Association*).

From a Durham Lodge Chairman

The policy of the trade unions in the past has simply been to present the demands for wage increases and then wait patiently for the owners' refusal. Just for example, the demands put forward by the Durham Miners' Association have definitely been turned down by the owners, yet, had it not been for the capitalist press the bulk of the miners would have known neither of the demands nor yet the rejection of these demands by the owners. Of what use is such action without an intensive campaign to convince the workers that with determination, and the strength of the organisation, such action can be successful? Therefore, what should be done is the organising of meetings in all Lodge branches throughout the country, pointing out that although the pits are not economic according to the owners, tremendous profits are being paid by all the leading companies throughout the country. Secondly, the bringing into the pit of up-to-date machinery has increased the output per man considerably; this in itself must place the owners in a more advantageous position, yet on its introduction they go one further and demand a reduction (in some cases to the extent of 50 per cent.) in the piece rates. Thirdly, to impress upon the workers the necessity for being active in their union affairs and of treating officials, not as leaders, but as representatives, there to do the bidding of the members.

By doing this we could depend upon the wholehearted support of our members even in strike action to enforce the demands. In my opinion the fact that we have always referred to officials as leaders was responsible for such things as the Black Circular. When Walter Citrine issued an appeal to the Labour Movement to refrain from taking part in the United Front, it was accepted by the Labour Party stalwarts as the policy of the Labour Party, despite the fact that it had never been discussed. This sham democracy exists in all Local Labour Parties, but in those districts where militant trade unions are affiliated, and where these unions to a certain extent have control, this was not put into operation. It is this sort of district that has prompted them to bring out the *Black Circular* so as to keep the control of the Labour Party and the trade unions, for such people as will accept the dictates of Walter Citrine and his colleagues without question. Any attempt to force union officials to carry out the principles of trade unionism is dubbed disruption, therefore the general acceptance by the unions of the Black Circular would mean their conversion into Fascist organisations, their functions being on a par with Spencerism. The word "fight" would be forgotten and the unions would be negotiating reductions instead of increases. The official positions would be open to any one but the ardent Socialist. "What a break for Capitalism!" The policy of the militant workers should be to point out all these facts to the workers both in the Union and workshop, and like my own particular district we shall find resolutions being carried, forbidding such a circular from being read.

Even the Labour Party in this locality called a conference against the new Unemployment Bill and invited the cooperation of all workers, irrespective of their political outlook. Although this is a mining area I see no reason why the same policy should not be carried out in other sections, for reaction is more or less the same in all unions, and everything is hitched to one's loyalty, not to the party, but to those who have control. Think for yourself, express any difference, then you should be in Moscow, the same story as told by the diehards of Liberalism and Conservatism.

JOHN F. WATSON (*Chairman, Hetton Lodge, Durham Miners' Association*).

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THE MEANING OF SIDNEY HOOK*

By L. RUDAS

IV. *Once more Dialectical Materialism and Communism*

Thus far I have not dealt with Mr. Hook's " criticism " of my articles on " Dialectical Materialism and Communism " in the LABOUR MONTHLY.[17] Compared with his " criticism " of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, of the Third International, of " official communism," of " orthodox dialectical materialism," his counter-revolutionary calumnies against the U.S.S.R., what he deigns to say about me is quite unimportant. For, though he tries to make me into " the most authoritative spokesman " of " orthodox dialectical materialism " I must gratefully decline the honour. The most authoritative spokesmen of orthodox, and of course of any, dialectical materialism are Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin. If I fail I do so on my own responsibility. But did I fail ?

There are certainly many faults in my writings which a better dialectical materialist would have avoided. But since I am only a modest worker in the revolutionary field, and in no way a leader in the political or in the theoretical domain mistakes on my part are inevitable. Nevertheless, I hope that, as a *system of views*, my writings (in spite of their faults) are in accordance with the line of my party and in consequence also with dialectical materialism. But have I failed on the main question ?

This was the question concerning the relation of dialectical materialism to communism. On other points alluded to by Mr. Hook, which—characteristically—are in most cases the same as those in the criticism of Mr. Conze in the *Plebs* (e.g. the question of development, the inevitability of communism, etc.), I gave an answer in the LABOUR MONTHLY and in the third edition of my pamphlet. Here is the essence of what Mr. Hook thinks fit to " offer " as the logical consequence of my statement on this question :

> This surpasses everything that the Catholic Church at the hey-day of its temporal power ever proclaimed. To hold seriously that a correct understanding of nature and society is possible only to members of the Communist Party is to say that only members of the Communist Party *can know the truth about anything*—whether it concerns problems of mathematics, physics, psychology, art or politics. To say this is to

*This is the concluding section of an article, the first two parts of which were printed in the March issue and the third part in the April issue. Copies of these numbers (7d. each post free) can be obtained from THE LABOUR MONTHLY, 7 John Street, W.C.1

[17]Reprinted by the LABOUR MONTHLY in pamphlet form, entitled *Dialectical Materialism and Communism*. 6d. each (7d. post free).

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> furnish the emotional premiss for a ruthless policy of suppression and censorship in every domain of knowledge, since if we are convinced that we have the truth while others who are not members of the Communist Party *must* be in error, we are justified in protecting society by liquidating the sources of illusion, error and deceit. And this is offered in the name of " scientific " philosophy, a " critical " party which strives to preserve the best in human culture, and—of Marxism ! *The Meaning of Marx*, p. 128. (Author's Italics.)

Now if I had said *this*, as it is " offered " here, my logic would be indeed " insane." But we saw previously the " characteristic emphasis on the doctrine of Marx " offered us by Mr. Hook. The " emphasis " in this case is not less " characteristic " than elsewhere ; " ruthless policy of suppression and censorship," " Catholic Church," in other places : " sectarianism. " For us all these are the familiar calumnies of certain " communists and materialists of a sort." And I thoroughly understand why Mr. Hook is so opposed to the connection between dialectical materialism and communism. *Being outside the Communist Party he of course knows that he can be neither a communist nor a dialectical materialist nor a Marxist.* But he would be unable to accomplish his social rôle if he were openly to abandon the name of " communist," " dialectical materialist," etc. This, as is well known, is generally the case with all his colleagues. Look at Kautsky. Look at Trotsky.

In consequence he is compelled to allege that you can be a communist outside the Communist Party, and being outside the Communist Party you can remain a dialectical materialist. But what do the facts show ? What does practice show ? I, like all communists, am a convinced adherent of practice ; for us practice (just as Engels viewed it !) is more convincing than the nicest phrases anybody can concoct about " genuine possibility and novelty." The instances given above of your calumnies about the U.S.S.R., the Communist Party and Stalin, your specimens of Marxism and dialectical materialism are just as self-damning in your case as in the case of Kautsky, Trotsky and other " unofficial Marxists."

But how does the question of communism and dialectical materialism stand *theoretically* ? The opportunity which Mr. Hook gave me to say something more about this question is the only reason why I decided to answer him at all.

Already in his first important theoretical formulation of his philosophical standpoint, in the *Deutsche Ideologie*, Marx stresses against Feuerbach :

> From these statements it is also clear to what extent Feuerbach deceives himself, when (Wiegand's Vierteljahrsschrift, 1845, V. 2) on the basis of the qualification *Gemeinmensch*, [social man] he declares that he is a communist, makes out of it a predicate of " *the* " Man, when he in consequence thinks that he can again change *the word communist which in the existing world means the adherent of a definite revolutionary party* into a mere category. (p. 31, Popular German ed.)

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Marx says this against *Feuerbach*, who was certainly a somewhat different personality from Mr. Hook! Feuerbach called himself a communist, on the ground that he sympathised with communism. No, answers Marx, you are no communist, this is a self-deception. A communist is only one who is the adherent (*Anhänger*) of a definite revolutionary party (*einer bestimmten revolutionären Partei*). With Marx this is quite natural. The party for Marx is not *any* little political grouping or caucus which comes and goes according to political circumstances, but the "*party in the historical sense*" (as the same Marx says in a letter to Freiligrath). And what is the party in this sense? It is *the vanguard of a revolutionary class, and its historical task is to change a given society into a higher social order by acting as the leader and conscious representative of the oppressed masses, in the first instance of the class from whose best elements it is built up.* This was true even of the leading parties in the bourgeois revolutions (in England the Independents, in France the Jacobins).

If in this respect there is no difference between revolutionary parties in the bourgeois revolutions and the revolutionary party of the proletariat, there is in other respects an essential difference. With all the parties in the bourgeois revolutions *practice and theory were, and were necessarily, in collision, while with the proletarian revolution revolutionary practice and revolutionary theory are, and necessarily must be, in perfect harmony.* But the theoretical basis of the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat is *dialectical materialism.*

The consequence is quite simple, at least to anybody who possesses the "elements of logic." As dialectical materialism is the theoretical foundation of the communist movement, as, on the other hand, the communist movement can be led *only* by the revolutionary party, as, further, you can be a communist *only* when you are an adherent of the revolutionary party, therefore no communist can have any other *conscious* philosophical standpoint than that of dialectical materialism; every communist must accept dialectical materialism as his philosophical basis. Otherwise his practice will be in hopeless divergence from his theory.

Now, it is well-known that in the ranks of the Communist Party there are some members who are not consistent dialectical materialists. Such members may be of two kinds. They may be leading theoreticians or practical party workers. The example of the first kind best known outside the U.S.S.R is Comrade Bukharin. What about such cases?

In the first place, the fact that even though a leading theoretician of the rank of Comrade Bukharin, was a mechanical materialist he was in no way prevented from continuing in the party shows that the hypocritical lamentations of Mr. Hook about the "ruthless censorship" in the Communist Party are nothing else than—a ruthless calumny.

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Lenin had already criticised the mechanical standpoint of Comrade Bukharin, but he was opposed *theoretically*, not at all *politically*. But when his mechanist standpoint led him into *political errors*, then of course he had to be fought *politically*. But in the case of such an eminent leader as Comrade Bukharin, his lack of dialectics was bound sooner or later, to lead to grave political errors. Only a Mr. Hook can imagine that politics and dialectics have nothing to do with each other. If you are a good dialectical materialist you will be one in politics as well as in theory. If not, you will show this both in theory and in practice.

That is what I meant when I said that Plekhanov and Bukharin could not have an unexceptionable line in dialectical materialism ultimately because they had not an unexceptionable line in politics. Again, only Mr. Hook would hold the characteristic opinion that you can betray the revolution, become a social patriot like Plekhanov—and remain a great dialectical materialist !

But here we have to distinguish between leaders and non-leaders on the political front. Take the late Stepanov-Skvorzov, an eminent party member, an old Bolshevik. He was a mechanical materialist. Nevertheless, in politics he was blameless. But he was no political leader. The discrepancy between his theoretical and political standpoints did not show itself in practice, it did not become conscious for him, nor did it harm the class struggle of the proletariat. He was combated theoretically. He died, unfortunately for the Party, before this theoretical fight against the mechanists was finished.

Now about Party members of the second kind. Whether they are economists or historians or practical party workers they must be *Marxists*. This is evident. If they are Marxists, they are dialectical materialists, even if their speciality is not philosophy. To what degree they are Marxists, is shown by their theoretical and practical work. If they commit faults in their own sphere, surely they also show that they are not quite good dialecticians (Marxism is inseparable from dialectics). But so long as these errors do not grow into a *system of thought hostile to Marxism*, and therefore to dialectical materialism, they are on the whole Marxists and so dialectical materialists, and thus can remain communists. But who can assert that Mr. Hook's views are not a *system of views* hostile to Marxism and dialectical materialism ?

This, I think, is clear for everybody. It has nothing to do with the Catholic Church or with ruthless censorship.

In connection with this and your other similar calumnies, Mr. Hook, let us cast a glance at one of your " neat little syllogisms." Not to refute them—oh no ! Nobody could do this better than you do yourself by means of your " glaring contradictions." But because it is a good opportunity to test your " dynamic activism."

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Being a great admirer of *formal logic* you characterise everywhere the " ruthlessness " of " official communists " by syllogisms based on formal logic. Now in formal logic, as you must admit, everything depends on the *major premiss*. Take the major premiss for granted, and everything goes like clock-work. So if you take it for granted that the idea is primary, and matter only another being of idea, the idealistic systems follow without formal-logical contradiction. Refute this premiss and idealism collapses.

Now how can one test whether the major premiss is correct or not ? Exclusively by *practice*, by *experience*. With this you again *must* agree. It is you who defend practice even against Engels, you are a " dynamic activist."

Now let us apply practice to one of your, and to one of my, syllogisms. You will excuse me if I give precedence to my syllogism. It runs :

1. Only a Trotskyite is a revolutionary, a genuine Marxist and communist.
2. Mr. Hook is a Trotskyite.
3. Therefore Mr. Hook is a revolutionary, a marxist, a communist.

Correct, Mr. Hook ? The whole argument is sound—*formally*. But essentially ? Here *only* practice, experience can decide. *And has decided already*. This practice shows the direct opposite to what formal logic shows ; it shows that Mr. Hook is quite the opposite of a revolutionary, a Marxist, a Communist.

Now let us take *your* syllogism. It is this :

1. Subjective intentions are irrelevant in evaluating an action ; only objective consequences must be considered.
2. A political mistake (!), by definition (!!) has counter-revolutionary objective consequences.
3. If S., our leader, makes a political mistake, he is a counter-revolutionist.
4. But S., our leader, cannot be a counter-revolutionist.
5. Therefore S., our leader, is in political matters infallible.[18]

This is your syllogism. Even from the standpoint of formal logic, it is, of course, anything but faultless. But we will not bother about that. That you must settle with the people who gave you a chair of philosophy in New York University. It is their business whom they consider fit to teach philosophy—mostly to the offspring of the bourgeoisie. But, again, what does *practice* prove ? It proves that our leader, S., leads the greatest revolutionary movement of history, that our leader, S., *leads the building up of socialism in a sixth part of the globe with a success unheard of in history ; it shows that our leader, S., is the greatest living historical personality of our time, whose greatness your puny*

[18] *The Meaning of Marx*, p. 129.

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impotent calumnies, Mr. Hook, do not even touch. Our leader, S., will live in the memory and hearts of men when your little insignificant personality will long, long ago have been committed to merciful oblivion. All this is proved by the greatest practice of world history till now. And practice, my dear Mr. Hook, is, *by your own definition* decisive. Practice, my dear Mr. Hook, will, sooner or later, answer your " neat little syllogisms " still more decisively.

Now to the other question—can there be a dialectical materialist who is not a communist ?

In the same work quoted above in the same context, on the next page, Marx declares for the benefit of everybody who can read in an intelligent manner :

> For *the practical Materialist, that is for the Communist*, the question is to revolutionise the existing world. (*l.c., Deutsche Ideologie*, p. 32).

Previously he declared that a communist is only a person who is the adherent of a revolutionary party, now he declares that the term " Communist " is equivalent to the term " practical materialist." Again natural with Marx, to be sure. You can be a " contemplative " materialist without taking part in the affairs of this world, but you cannot be a *practical, that is, a dialectical materialist* without being a communist, that is the adherent of " a definite revolutionary party," the Communist Party. Indeed, what kind of dialectical materialist would he be who would restrict his dialectical materialism " to a " method of investigation " in the fields of mathematics, physics, etc., but would reject the *practical consequences* of his philosophy ? Nonsense, my dear Mr. Hook.

Does this mean that nobody outside the ranks of the Communist Party " can know the truth about anything," as Mr. Hook " characteristically emphasises " ? Again nonsense, my dear Mr. Hook. Your " neat little syllogisms " in this as in other cases are nonsense and nothing else (taken logically and not socially, in which respect they are something quite different).

Not only did I never say such a thing, but it does not implicitly follow from the premisses I have declared here and elsewhere. But what I have said and what I say now is that all *correct* results in mathematics, physics and elsewhere are *dialectical results* even if their authors do not know that they are applying dialectical methods. They would arrive, however, at much more correct results if they *consciously* applied the dialectical method. Engels stressed this in his *Naturdialektik* and in his famous preface to the second edition of *Anti-Dühring*.

Does it again follow from this that everybody who is on this path (and many natural scientists *are* to-day on this path) must become a communist in order to be able consciously to apply the dialectical method in his field of work ? Certainly not. But are all who in their special

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field apply more or less the method of dialectical materialism already thorough-going and consistent dialectical materialists, which means, as was shown before, *practical* materialists, whose aim it is to revolutionise the world? Decidedly not. *A dialectical materialist is a person who consciously makes Marxism, dialectical materialism his scientific—practical and theoretical—standpoint. Dialectical materialism is inseparable from Marxism and vice-versa.* And so, if anybody is a dialectical materialist, he must also become a Marxist, and this leads him, I assert, *sooner or later*—as I said in my previous articles in the LABOUR MONTHLY—into the ranks of the Party, as is proved by the example of many eminent scientists both in and outside the U.S.S.R.

The case is the same here as in the field of the political class struggle of the proletariat. Many proletarians rally around the Party fighting under its leadership, though they are not Party members. The more they *develop* their *class consciousness* in this fight against capitalism under the leadership of the communists the nearer they come to the Party and, finally, they become fully class conscious and join the vanguard of their class, the Communist Party. Not all workers are able to develop to this highest point of class consciousness. The same with many scientists who have an inclination to dialectical materialism. But the most logical amongst them will be those who draw every practical consequence from their theoretical standpoint.

Now it is quite evident that Mr. Hook *must* pretend that the views put forward above are the result of an "insane logic." He *must* hold the opposite view that "it is possible for one to embrace a thorough-going naturalism (that means in his phraseology dialectical materialism !) in metaphysics and logic without being a Marxist." (*The Meaning of Marx*, p. 52.) The *social source* of this position I explained above and it is clear without any further discussion: he would completely expose himself and his political standing were he to act otherwise. But let us examine his "logic" with the help of which he attempts to "prove" this. I leave it to the reader to decide on whose side is the "insane logic."

> "Marxism," says Mr. Hook in 'proving' his standpoint "is a guide to action. But to what kind of action? To social action which aims by the revolutionary transformation of society to introduce a classless socialist society. That is the goal. *Every Marxist must be socialist*—his thinking and acting are directed towards achieving socialism. The scientific method by which he achieves it distinguishes the Marxist from other socialists. But the goal is an integral part of his action, otherwise he could not distinguish himself from those who would use scientific knowledge to *oppose* socialism. Now the choice of one goal or ideal rather than another is not determined by any cosmic forces. It is human activity. To be sure, at any given time the character, number and possibility of realisation of ideals are conditioned by a complex of social and economic forces. But the choosing of any special goal on the part

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> of an individual or of a class does not flow from *knowledge*, but from *interests*, *needs* and the will which is rooted in them. Knowledge, of course, will influence interest and will, but it is even truer to say that interest and will use knowledge for their own purpose. . . . The fact that socialism is a class ideal whose validity is established not by logical proof, but in successful class struggle, has important bearings upon the conduct of that struggle. Marxism, then, since it frankly accepts the *class* ideal, is not a science (! L.R.) but a scientific method of achieving socialism. Science is ethically neutral: the social purposes to which it is put cannot be deduced from its systematic propositions." (*l.c.* p. 52. f. Author's own italics.—L.R.)

The " sane " logic of Mr. Hook shines here in its full glory. Let us look at his " systematic propositions " more closely:

1. Every Marxist must be a socialist. His acting and *thinking* has to be directed towards achieving socialism. His *scientific method* distinguishes the Marxist from other socialists.
2. Nevertheless the *thinking* and *scientific* method of the Marxist has nothing to do with *science*. Science deals with " cosmic forces," science is " *ethically neutral*," that is, " the social purposes to which it is put cannot be deduced from its systematic propositions."
3. In consequence, the " class ideal " of the Marxist " does not flow from *knowledge*, but from interests, needs ; this follows also out of the fact " that Marxism, since it frankly accepts the class ideal," is *not a science*.
4. Marxism, however, is a scientific method ; but a scientific method which *leads to no science*, since Marxism is not a science.
5. In view of the fact that Marxism is not a science, *science can be used to oppose socialism*.
6. Consequently you can be a dialectical materialist without being a Marxist, you can even use your scientific knowledge to oppose socialism.
7. And, finally, socialism is not an objective truth, it is " higher " and " truer " " only for those who choose it." (*l.c.* p. 53.)

This is the " sane logic " of a *counter-revolutionary*. The man who was thoroughly dissatisfied with the rôle which activity plays in the philosophy of Engels, the man whose " dynamic activism " enabled him to sneer contemptuously at us " orthodox Marxists " and " philosophical illiterates," unmasks at last the meaning of his " activism " : it is the same kind of " activism " which is propagated *by the fascists*. Hear what the fascists say and compare it with the statements of our " dynamic activist " :

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> "Doctrine," says Mussolini "beautifully defined and carefully elucidated, with headlines and paragraphs, might be lacking ; but there was to take its place something more decisive—*faith*." (Mussolini, The Political and Social Doctrine of Fascism, p. 10.)

And the German Editor of this work, H. Wagenführ, adds this comment :

> Fascism is led by natural instinct, by the forces of sentiment. . . . Fascism is the enemy of enlightenment, and therefore he relegates intellect and reason to the second place. First activity, then the doctrine ; first the unerring, instinctive feeling and life (*Erlebnis*), then the vacillating reason.

And he continues :

> It is necessary now that Fascism should reach the second phase of its development ; it has to create an eternally youthful theory which would be acceptable also to those who in consequence of their false education and learning are accustomed to think first and to act after. (p. 8.)

It would be an offence to our readers explicitly to draw their attention to the " affinity " between these views and the " systematic propositions " of Mr. Hook.

The " insane logic " is, in consequence, wholly on your side, my dear Mr. Hook. You have not the faintest idea what the *unity of theory and practice* in Marxism means, that Marxism is the *science* of a class on whose side is *objective truth* ; you have not the faintest idea what the term " party " means for Marx, Engels, Lenin, what kind of a party the revolutionary party of the proletariat *is*. You do not see that *dialectical materialism is slandered and calumniated by the bourgeoisie precisely because logically it leads to revolution, to Communism.*

But I must beg the readers' pardon. I was indeed on the very road to commit a real error. That fact is that Mr. Hook himself slanders and calumniates " orthodox dialectical materialism " *precisely because* it logically leads into the ranks of the Communist Party. Otherwise he would not require of Marxism to be " ethically neutral ! "

You, Mr. Hook, may slander and calumniate it in company with all Trotskyists : the fact remains a fact—you are the adherent of a little *counter-revolutionary sect*, while the Communist Party is the revolutionary world party of the international proletariat leading it to victory. The social revolution, under the leadership of this party, will change not only the existing capitalist order, but at the same time change completely the mind of Mankind on the basis of dialectical materialism, on the basis of *Marxism as a science*. And I repeat (and you can again accuse me of a hidden theology !)—*the dialectics of actual society* (which, of course, is not to be confounded with dialectics in nature as you in your " cosmic " ignorance do !)—*is the guarantee of the victory of the proletariat.*

(CONCLUDED.)

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BOOK REVIEWS

THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF CHAPAYEV.

Chapayev. Dimitri Furmanov. Martin Lawrence. pp. 423. 7s. 6d.

THE book, *Chapayev* is the most grimly realistic book on war that I have ever read. From it one gets the exact types of people that lived in the areas dealt with ; Russia between Ivanovo and the Urals ; the work they had been engaged in till the Red Army recruited them ; how they learned their soldiering and how they acquitted themselves as fighters ; Chapayev, the commander, was a type produced by his environment like other people, but of so unique a character as to stagger one at his achievements.

The area dealt with is largely the Samara district and, next to Moscow itself, the City of Samara on the Volga is the city more than any other indelibly impressed on my own mind.

My first visit to the U.S.S.R. was in 1921, at the time of the famine, and I had the opportunity of going down the Volga, this being the famine area, along with President Kalinin and his staff who were paying a special visit to this stricken area. The city that showed most evidence of the dire effects of the awful drought was Samara. I there saw such grim sights of famine effects and was present at the meetings of local Soviets where the members came to report and to confer with Comrade Kalinin, that although I have visited the Soviet Union a number of times, Samara is ever in mind when I think of Russia. So to me it was intensely interesting to read Comrade Furmanov's book—*Chapayev*.

The author of the book, being a personal friend and fellow fighter with Chapayev, is especially qualified to give the intensely vivid descriptions of personalities, types of the people affected, of the industries they were connected with, and how they reacted to war conditions.

The period dealt with is short, a part of 1919, the special work of the Red Army in the area being to drive out of Russia Kolchak and the Cossacks he was leading. On occasion I have been keen to understand the doings of the counter-revolutionary generals, each in turn, Wrangel, Denikin, and others, but in 1924 I was in Siberia, and at Novo-Nikolayevsk the capital, now Novo-Sibirsk, I was privileged to meet many from whom I was able to learn many things and to get contacts with special personalities. I not only learned of the struggles during the war-time and counter-revolution, but was with the Proletarian Judge who sentenced Kolchak to be shot.

This book deals specifically with the Red Army commanders and commissars and rank-and-filers—men and women—but arrests the reader's attention by the description of how they responded to the actual fighting. Peasants, some with considerable military experience, and others with none, up against the fierce Cossack warriors of the Steppes, whose lives had been spent fighting. Detailed and fascinating descriptions of the good and bad qualities of commanders, commissars and Red Army men enables one to get the ideology of the various personages and masses that will make clear how mainly peasants, together with a small percentage of the industrial proletariat, led by Chapayev and staff—all of the people and from the people—achieved that mighty task that has already accomplished such vast changes of so deep and sterling a character. I at least am one of those over-joyed with the lessons taught by them, the glorious

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example set by them and the assurance it gives, that the workers of the world will ere long travel on the same path and also achieve economic and political emancipation.

TOM MANN.

ORGANISED CONFUSION.

What is Socialism? Independent Socialist Party. Manchester. 7 pp. 1d.

THE "Independent Socialist Party," a breakaway from the I.L.P. in the Lancashire area, is able to carry on a certain measure of propaganda because of the encouragement given it by the Manchester and Salford Trades Council.

This so-called party is one of the many variations and groupings that affect to be "critical" of the Labour Party, but whose chief function is to keep the workers, wherever possible, attached to the Labour Party and away from the revolutionary struggle against capitalism.

Its method common to all such groups, is to spread confusion, and when one reads its statement of policy as outlined in the pamphlet: "What is Socialism," one must admit that it is making a big effort to do its job.

"Socialism," we are told, "is two things." This is not bad for a start. "Two things," and the first boiled down reads: "all the equality which human action can secure for the new-born child—all that equality, Socialism holds, is the child's manifest human right." If the child does not get this then it is an "inhuman society," and it is the job of "every man and woman of goodwill and imagination . . . . to change it to a human one." This first "thing," as presented in the pamphlet, is simply one of those verbose sentimental generalities picked up from MacDonald while he was still the leader of the I.L.P.

The second "thing": "Socialism declares that the present economic system is choking itself . . . ." It asserts as a self-evident fact that "to allow poverty to continue is a criminal stupidity."

All right, but if there is criminal stupidity causing starvation and death to thousands of men, women and children, for that is what follows from "poverty," then there must be those who are criminally responsible. What has Socialism to say about the "criminals?" Not a word. The "criminals" who rob and starve the workers, who use the law courts, the military and police to maintain their power and privilege, these are carefully covered up and screened with the phrase: "It is a stupid crime *committed by the community against itself.*"

You see how nice it is. The robber capitalists aren't to blame, neither are robber landlords, the parasitic "lords and ladies," who would say a word against them? "It is a stupid crime committed by the community against itself."

But if the "robbers" go scot free, what are we to say of the labour leaders who, climbing on the backs of the workers have qualified for participating in all the sham and humbug of the Jubilee? This is what we get on page four:

"We are not accusing them. They behave as men naturally do behave. And very often they are genuinely unaware of the conflict between their interests and the interests of the workers they represent. Very often they are truly unconscious that their actual function, in a declining capitalist economy, is helping the employer to keep capitalism alive."

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The labour leaders, when they betray the working class, when they appoint, as they did in 1929, a Royal Commission on Unemployment and an Economy Committee, to work out measures for starving the workers when already while war is being prepared they declare for its support (in a cunning manner, of course), when the General Council in line with the policy of the labour leaders issues its infamous Black Circular, they are "genuinely unaware," they are "*truly* unconscious" of what they are doing. And the Manchester and Salford Trades Council is encouraging the spread of this sorry tripe.

However, as nobody is to blame, what is to be done?

"The vision of Socialism remains as beautiful and necessary as ever." So, those who have their vision and who are prepared to overcome self and self-interest (Purcell will have a laugh at that one) will set themselves to the next task. "It consists in the regeneration of the labour movement." An outstanding leader of the "Party" we are told in a circular accompanying the pamphlet, is "Mr. John Middleton Murry, the literary critic." Is he busy "regenerating" the Labour Party? No, brother, no. He's in America on a lecture tour. What's that? "Self-interest." Now, why bring that up?

W. G.

THE OBITUARY OF THE "TIMES"

The History of "The Times": Vol. 1 "The Thunderer in the Making, 1785-1841." "Times" Office. 515 pp. 15s. net.

"ALL mythology," wrote Marx, "masters and dominates and shapes the forces of nature in and through the imagination; hence it disappears as soon as man gains mastery over the forces of nature. What becomes of the Goddess Fame side by side with Printing House Square?" This was written, however, in 1859, before the days of Riga correspondents, Piggott forgeries, Zinoviev letters, corpse-boiling factories, and the rest of the modern apparatus of Printing House Square propaganda. In the period of extreme capitalist decay "mythology" returns in full force in a new form as an indispensable weapon of capitalist propaganda; and this transformation is typically reflected in the contrast of the present-day *Times* in decay, a cunning poison-spewing dotard, fawning on all that is old and rotten, and pouring its venom on all that is new and rising, as against the vigorous, battling, straight-hitting and even in some respects progressive *Times* of a century ago, of the days of the young and rising industrial bourgeoisie.

> The *Times* newspaper was yesterday unanimously ejected by the Fellows at Trinity College, Cambridge. They have of late been much disgusted at the violent and unprincipled language of the *Times*. (*St. James' Chronicle*, January 19th, 1832, quoted p. 276.)
>
> For one copy of the *Times* that is purchased for the usual purposes of a public journal, nine, we venture to say, are purchased to be lent to the wretched characters who, being miserable, look to political changes for an amelioration of their condition. They hope to find encouragement to persevere in their own vices among the pictures of profligacy by which the *Times* malignantly caricatures whatever is respectable in the country. (Ibid, quoted p. 275.)

Such was the reputation of the *Times* a century ago among the majority of the "respectable" classes. A century ago the *Times* poured its contempt on the

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idle gentry and their "luxurious" lives, on the "high-born and high-bred young Tory with the wages of corruption in his pocket," castigated Royalty and its expenditure in terms which would give it a fit of apoplexy to-day, could speak of the landlords' enclosures of the people's commons in plain terms as "theft."

> To snatch from the poor their commons and give them the job of fencing in the waste is like picking a pocket of a handkerchief and employing the owner to mark it with the initials of the thief. (*Times*, April 7, 1845, quoted Hammond's "Age of the Chartists," p. 138.)

could describe London in bitter terms:

> Our metropolis, the greatest and wealthiest in the world, consigns to pestilential air and bad drainage more than a moiety of its two million inhabitants. (*Times*, July 22, 1847.)
>
> A town of manufacturers and speculators is apt to leave the poor to shift for themselves, to stew in cellars and garrets, nor are landlords and farmers apt to care much for cottages. (*Times*, May 9, 1848.)

and could speak of England without concealment as "a nation of castes, classes and factions." (*Times*, October 17, 1847.)

All this is no contradiction to the present-day *Times* with its rose-water apologetics and concealment of class-divisions and of existing misery and poverty, and its defence of every decaying and rotting institution as an indispensable part of the sacred fabric. It is only the reflection of the changed position of the bourgeoisie, of that new bourgeoisie which grew up on the basis of the industrial revolution, and passed from the position of a class fighting for power against the old order to that of a class in power, amalgamated with the old order, and to-day to that of a ruling class in decay. The same transformation, stage by stage, can be traced in the pages of *Punch*. The *Times* represents in fact the clearest-spoken organ of the British bourgeoisie, expecially of the City, financial and mercantile interests, through all the stages of development, and herein lies its historic importance. As Hazlitt, who had served on its staff, wrote already in 1823:

> it is the witness of the British metropolis; the mouthpiece, oracle and echo of the Stock Exchange, the organ of the mercantile interest. It takes up no falling cause; fights no uphill battle; advocates no great principle; holds out a helping hand to no oppressed or obscure individual. It is "ever strong upon the stronger side."

A harsh, but mercilessly accurate, characterisation which drew from the angry *Times* the typically bourgeois reply to warn the editor of the review that had published it to "be cautious how he allows a discarded servant to bespatter and scandalise his employer." As the compilers of the present volume write:

> By "the people" the *Times* meant the elements whose material interests were bound up with the commercial system. But if the *Times* pitied the poor for their poverty and consequent unfitness for power, it scorned the aristocrats and their claims to privilege. In the view of the *Times*' ability to achieve economic independence was itself a political virtue of the first order (p. 246).
>
> The dislike of the *Times* for universal suffrage is traceable to its recognition of the rights of property. Any science of politics was worthless which did not begin with respect for private accumulations earned by personal initiative (p. 248).

The present volume is a history of the early years of the *Times* up to 1841. It is thus a social-political document of considerable importance for the early history of the British bourgeoisie, the earliest, most typical and most fully developed bourgeois class. It is written with a high degree of research and care, and even, while endeavouring to present matters in the most favourable light, with a considerable degree of candour such as is only permitted to history a

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century old.[1] It remains to be seen whether any similar degree of candour will be caried forward to the third volume, which is due " to complete the story down to recent years." Will the compilers, for example, venture to present a balance sheet of the present-day *Times* and its sources of revenue, as they have endeavoured to do for the old ?

The record is of value, not only for the development of the British bourgeoisie, but also for the demonstration of some of the inner workings of the mechanism of the bourgeois state, of which the *Times* since the eighteen-twenties has been as much an institution in practice as the Prime Minister or the so-called public schools, all outside the formal constitution, but integral parts of the ruling class structure.

Of especial interest is the light thrown on the relations of the state and the press. Confidential state papers, both British and French, are published which show the early recognition by the state of the rôle of the press as an instrument of government, as a social-political organising weapon. The early attempts at manipulation of this new instrument were naïve and crude, following the line of subsidies to the press from the state secret funds. The Treasury was recognised as " the Manager of the Press " (Treasury Notice on the Press, 1809). From 1789 to 1799 the *Times* proprietor received £300 a year from the Treasury " in reward for the politics " of the paper (p. 51). Similar payments were made by individuals. In 1797 the Editor of the *Times*, Finey, after receiving a bundle of notes to suppress certain personal references, and being asked " Will that be enough ? " replied " Give me a few more and by St Patrick I will knock out the brains of any one in our office who dare even *whisper* your name " (p. 50). These were the days of the early small-fry corruption of the capitalist press.

This system of small-scale corruption, on a level of backstairs tipping, could not provide the bourgeoisie with the press that it required, both for its own information, and for moulding opinion in accordance with its class interests. The bourgeoisie required a *class-press*, not the mere venal irresponsible sheets following the whim of individuals or individual ministers and ministries. A different basis of financial subsidy had therefore to be found. This problem was gradually solved by the system of advertisement revenue, by which the big capitalists as a whole maintain the modern press. The fight for the so-called " independence " of the press, which figures largely in these pages, was in fact a fight for the transition from dependence on fluctuating ministries and party managers to dependence on the capitalist class as a whole. The *Times* was a protagonist in this fight.

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[1]For a test of the degree of candour and completeness the present reviewer sought for the famous episode of the *Times*' prosecution of its printers in 1810 for the crime of trade unionism, of which Francis Place wrote :

> The cruel persecutions of the Journeymen Printers employed in the *Times* newspaper in 1810 were carried to an almost incredible extent. The judge who tried and sentenced some of them was the Common Sergeant of London, Sir John Sylvester, commonly known by the cognomen of " Bloody Black Kack." No judge took more pains than did this judge on the unfortunate printers, on whom he inflicted scandalously severe sentences. (Place Mss. 27798-8 : see Webbs' " History of Trade Unionism," pp. 78-9.)

This quotation from Place does not appear in the present volume, although four quotations from Place are included. A reference to the exhaustive index under " Trade Unions," 'under " Printers," and under " Working Classes, *Times* attitude towards," yields no light on the episode. However, the episode may finally be run to earth in an obscure footnote on p. 115 and a one-line reference on p. 85. The treatment is hardly adequate for a historical record, which gives unlimited space for small personal intrigues and business details ; however, it is not entirely suppressed.

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Why did the *Times* win its pre-eminence in spite of the fact that in its origins it was no more than a third-rate venal sheet of a jobbing printer? Undoubtedly because in the early decades of the nineteenth century it first sensed the need of, and realised the rôle of, a *class-organ* of the bourgeoisie. Its efficient organisation of its news service during the Napoleonic wars, and its adoption of steam-printing in 1814, provided it with the technical basis for this. In the succeeding decades it won its position as the leader of the rising bourgeoisie. It made itself, not merely a newspaper of news, but above all *a political agitator, organiser and leader* of the struggle of the new bourgeoisie against the old régime of the landed aristocracy. These were the "heroic" days of the new bourgeoisie, and they were the "heroic" days of the *Times*. From these battles something may still be learnt in the art of political journalism. Around its ceaseless agitation it assisted to organise a network of "Political Unions" of the middle classes throughout the country. Its language took on a militant, almost a bourgeois-revolutionary tone. If Parliament rejected the Reform Bill, "they have no kind of connexion or sympathy with us; they cannot be Englishmen"; and direct threats against their lives were issued: "We warn them to desist—not if they value the lives and happiness of others, for they are too selfish to be moved by such considerations, but if they value their own" (p. 274). The Tories "stigmatised the *Times* as a revolutionary journal inciting to violence" (p. 273). Against every threat of the ruling class to prosecute, the *Times* threw out its appeal for mass agitation and support in the country.

But in fact the fight of the rising bourgeoisie was on two fronts, on the one hand against the old régime to win through to control of the State in their own interests, not by revolution, but only by the threat of mass-revolution, on the other hand against the masses and rising working class, whom they sought to exploit politically as allies for their struggle. The fight against these was in fact far more merciless. This fight for leadership between the two new forces was partially expressed in the fight between the *Times* and Cobbett's *Political Register*, and later in the fight between the *Times* and the Chartist press (the *Northern Star* reached four times the sale of the *Times*). As soon as the new bourgeoisie had won power with the Reform Act of 1832, it joined hands with the old reaction against the masses.

> After 1832 the working classes, having done a lion's share in the Reform struggle, discovered that the fruits of their labour were reserved for a new electorate of fewer than a million voters. They became "deaf with passion," to quote the words which Barnes (Editor of the *Times*) used privately when the Whigs were out of power in 1834 (p. 248).

This transformation in the position of the bourgeoisie was faithfully reflected in the *Times*, which moved over to the old Tories and helped to form the modern Conservative Party (rôle in the production of the Tamworth Manifesto of 1834, which constituted the starting point of the modern Conservative Party). The outcry on popular platforms against this "betrayal" by the *Times* was loud. A speech at a great London meeting in 1836 is quoted (p. 323):

> The paper known as the *Times* (great uproar) would not have obtained its overwhelming circulation but by its support of liberal opinion (loud cheers). It was the people at large who had raised the *Times* to its importance; and what had it done in return as an acknowledgment to that people? Why, it had turned its back upon the people (uproar). As soon as the parties connected with it had gained their ends, their own purposes, they turned their backs upon those who had elevated their paper to its height; they forsook them, they deserted the people and supported the Tories. (Hear! hear!)

The *Times* led the reactionary fight against even the repeal of the crippling stamp duties on the press, which was fought for and won by the struggle of the

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Chartist press. The *Times* passed into the organ of the great dominant bourgeoisie, and so to-day to the organ of the bourgeoisie in decay.

To-day the *Times* is writing its own history. If autobiography is the sign of approaching decease, the *Times* and all it stands for is evidently conscious that its race is nearly run.

R. P. D.

BACK TO "HOME CROFTING!"

Self-Subsistence for the Unemployed. By J. W. Scott, M.A., D.Phil. Faber and Faber. pp. 223. 6s.

THIS learned professor (in Logic and Philosophy at University College, Cardiff), has written a book in which he expounds the "Homecroft" plan for employment; it reminds one of the reactionary ideas of Gandhi who endeavours to persuade the toiling millions of India to revert back again to the spinning wheel, in order that British Imperialism may be crushed. The learned professor writes:

> A worker under our economic régime has usually to rely on wages for the things he needs to support himself and his family. The flow of wages is uncertain. Hence he suffers from poverty. It is plain that the problem would be solved if by some miracle he and his household became self-providing immediately the supply of wages failed.
>
> But why call this a miracle? Why should we settle down so soon to the conclusion that unemployed people could never turn round and make their own things? (p. 15).

So away to Home-crofting:

> Where the croft simply lay around the home, equipped with its spaces where fruit and vegetables could be grown, with its poultry-run, tool-shed, goat-stable, etc., the whole constituting a perennial larder around the house which the family could keep replenished by working in their spare hours is a semi-recreational way (p. 182) . . . . . let a hand-mill be installed for grinding flour, let an expedition be arranged for gathering nuts, let a jam-making or wild berry picking party be suggested, let any one of the innumerable enterprises which strengthen the position or heighten the comfort of the group be conducted in the proper spirit, and Nature herself would see to the response (p. 184).

So we go on playing like children—at shops, mothers and fathers and other delightful childish games. And all this from a professor of logic. So very nice, so sweet, so disinterested. By "Home-crofting" the two million unemployed could become self-supporting—back to land with Sarah—must be the cry.

To persuade a publisher to take the risk of such a book is almost a miracle in these days, especially when one reads Lord Leverhulme's preface to Professor Spooner's book, "Wealth and Waste," in which he states:

> With the means that science has already placed at our disposal we might provide for all the wants of each of us in food, shelter and clothing by one hour's work per week for each of us from school age to dotage.

The real trouble which our dear professor of logic cannot see is that the people do not own the means that science has already placed at our disposal, and are therefore divorced from the means of life. When the people own the means of production and distribution there will be no need for home-crofting, no need for the slogan "Back to the land with a hand-mill"; no need for organising a nut-picking expedition. For such proposals as the professor's are reactionary

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in character and are in line with Gandhi's idea of the spinning wheel. We wonder what Lancashire textile workers would think of the equally stupid idea of each house a spinning wheel so that the unemployed workers could make their own shirts. The price of the book is 6s. ! ! !

P. G.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

Freedom and Organisation. Bertrand Russell. (Allen & Unwin.) 528 pp. 15s.

William Morris. Gerald H. Crow. (The Studio Ltd.) 120 pp.

A Searchlight on the Navy. Hector C. Bywater. (Constable.) 308 pp. 10s.

The Theatre in the U.S.S.R. Voks. 120 pp.

The Stranglehold of Financial Lords. Alec Brown. (D. Jefferies, Mendlesham, Suffolk.) 1d.

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